

COACH

Issue 617 £1

MART

December 6, 1990



**Tested
in service:
Skills'
Plaxton
DAF**

Neoplan plans: past, present and future
Atkins of Skegness: profile of a two coach firm

Carlton P.S.V.

STOP PRESS

Just in. 1986 MCW CUMMINS L10 ENGINE, 4 speed, full automatic gearbox, 79 recliners, nearside front power door, toilet, orange curtains, luggage pen, seat back pockets, full soft trim, new MoT 17.9.91, resprayed all white, choice of two. Now only one.

NEOPLAN

1988 Neoplan Skyliner, 77 seats, Gardner engine, ZF Automatic, radio/PA/cassette, TV/video monitor, VHS recorder, toilet, fridge, drinks. Stock No.0022.

1983/4 Neoplan Skyliner, 71-75 seats, Merce V10 engine, 6 speed ZF gearbox, toilet, fridge, radio/PA, drinks machine. Stock Nos. 9017 to 9023.

1983 Neoplan Cityliner (Mercedes), 49 recliners, 6 speed ZF, toilet washroom, drinks machine, sausage boiler, fridge, driver's bunk, continental door, courier seat, (rollo or curtains)? MoT 16.05.91.

1982 Neoplan Jetliner (Mercedes), 49 recliners, N/S plug door, 6 speed ZF, toilet washroom, drinks machine, fridge, continental door, rollo blinds, drivers bunk, courier seat, MoT 13.05.91.

1982 Neoplan Skyliner (with cherished plates), well preserved and maintained, very recently remoquetted (blue) and resprayed (white), 71 recliners, Mercedes V10, 6-speed ZF gearbox, toilet, fridge, drinks machine etc. This vehicle has been in regular daily use - a very clean example. Stock No.0004.

MAN

1982 SR 280, 47 recliners, Sutrak air conditioning, 6-speed gearbox, o/s centre power door, o/s centre sunken toilet, driver's bunk, fridge, drinks machine, tinted double glazed windows, Rollo blinds, courier seat, Webasto and timer, seat back nets, headrest covers, wheel discs, driver's locker. Stock No.0008.

VOLVO

1984 VOLVO B10M Jonckheere P599, 49 recliners, toilet, coffee machine, continental door, double glazing, fridge, choice of 4. New MoT's.

1983 VOLVO B10M Jonckheere P599, various specification, 48/51 seats, toilet, coffee machine etc, choice of 4. New MoT's.

1980 VOLVO B58 Air/Leaf Dominant, 12 metre, 53 seats, 48 recliners, 5 fixed, automatic gearbox, power door, tinted windows, curtains, side lockers, MoT Dec 1990. Stock No.0012.

1980 VOLVO B58, 11 metre, 51 seats, Alpha power door, Telma, white livery, red moquette and MoT Nov 90. Stock No.0014.

1979 VOLVO B58, 12 metre, 57 seats (re-moquetted), Alpha power door, side lockers, livery white and MoT Feb 91. Stock No.0015.

AEC

1977 PLAXTON EXPRESS, 53 seater, semi-auto gearbox, Bristol dome, white/black exterior, autumn tint moquette. MoT 3.10.91. Stock No.0006.

SCANIA

1986 Scania Berkhof Eclipse double deck, 76 seats, toilet, double glazed windows, Telma, coffee machine, livery maroon/white, MoT April 1991. Stock No.0021.

BEDFORD

1981 Bedford YNT, 53 seater Plaxton, side lockers, autumn tint moquette, livery white blue/yellow stripes, reconditioned engine, new MoT Sept 1991. Stock No.M9014.

1980 Bedford PJK, 29 seater, Duple Dom, MoT 16.9.91. Stock No.0007.

1979 Bedford YMT, 53 seater Plaxton, red/cream exterior, red moquette. Stock No.M9036.

LEYLAND

1983 Leyland Tiger 245 Plaxton 3500, 50 recliners, 6 speed ZF gearbox, N/S plug door, Telma, side lockers, double glazed windows, curtains.

1982 Leyland Leopard, 12 metre Dominant, 51 reclining seats, double glazed, Telma, radio/PA, Bristol dome, MoT Feb 1991. Stock No.9033.

1982 Leyland Leopard, 12 metre Plaxton, 49 seats, semi-auto gearbox, toilet, coffee machine, side lockers, new MoT 16.08.91. Stock No.0010.

1981 Leyland Leopard Duple Dominant, 53 seats, red moquette, livery white, new MoT 23.08.91.

1981 Leyland, 11 metre Plaxton, 53 seats (remoquetted), X'Press, side lockers, grey/red moquette, new MoT 29.08.91. Stock No.9013.

1981 Leyland, 12 metre Plaxton, 49 recliners, cream exterior, autumn tint moquette, new MoT 29.09.91. Stock No.9010.

1977 Leyland Leopard, 11 metre Plaxton Viewmaster, 41 recliners, toilet, power door, orange curtains.

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LEYLAND 1982 (AUGUST) TIGER 245 PLAXTON VIEWMASTER 12M, 49 recliners, red/orange moquette, courier seat, power entrance door, tinted side windows, curtains, o/s/r sunken toilet, continental door, water boiler, fridge, wiring for TV/video, grey/duo green.

LEYLAND 1982 TIGER 245 PLAXTON VIEWMASTER 12M, 49 recliners, green moquette, rear sunken toilet, continental door, double glazing, Webasto heating, driver's berth, aircraft style lockers to luggage racks, water boiler, fridge, TV/video wiring, cream/green.

BOVA 1984 CALYPSO Integral 12M, 53 str., brown/orange moquette, power door, tinted windows, all white.

BOVA 1983 EUROPA II Integral 12M, 49 str., (44 recliners + 5 fixed), red moquette, power door, courier seat, curtains, toilet, continental door, TELMA, Webasto, driver's fan, all white.

BOVA 1982 EUROPA II Integral 12M, 51 recliners, brown moquette, courier seat, power entrance door, curtains, TELMA retarder, white/blue/red.

BOVA 1982 EUROPA II Integral 12M, 52 recliners, red moquette, courier seat, curtains, power entrance door, cream/orange.

DAF 1983 (NOVEMBER) DKFL JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P50 12M, 49 recliners, blue moquette, power door, o/s rear sunken toilet with continental door, double glazed tinted windows, Tempo 100, wired TV/video, Telma retarder, drinks machine, magazine nets, all white.

DAF 1983 (AUGUST) SB2300 DHS JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P599 12M, 49/53 recliners, red stripe moquette, demountable centre toilet, white/maroon/orange/red.

DAF 1983 DKFL VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M, 48 recliners, Autumn tint moquette, rear floor mounted toilet, continental entrance door, white/grey/red.

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DAF 1983 DKFL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200 12M, 51 recliners, autumn tint moquette, power door, double glazing, curtains, courier seat, continental door, Webasto, Telma retarder, white/green/black.

VOLVO 1986 B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M, 49 recliners, sunken toilet o/s rear, courier seat, curtains, fridge, water boiler, tinted side windows, beige/blue moquette trim, white + yellow/orange stripes.

VOLVO 1984 (AUGUST) B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M, 49 recliners, beige/red moquette, rear sunken toilet with continental door, driver's berth, courier seat, Webasto heating, TELMA retarder, drinks machine, curtains, tinted double glazing, power entrance door, wired for T.V. + video, silver/blue.

VOLVO 1983 (SEPTEMBER) B10M GT JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P599 12M, 48/52 recliners, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, driver's berth, courier seat, power entrance door, drinks machine, wired for TV/video, blue/white/yellow/green.

VOLVO 1982 B58 DUPLÉ DOMINANT IV 12M, 53 recliners, brown moquette, tinted double glazed side windows, curtains, TELMA retarder, air/leaf suspension, automatic chassis lubrication system, cream + brown/grey reliefs.

VOLVO 1981 B58 PLAXTON SUPREME 12M, 49 recliners, brown moquette, toilet at nearside rear, power entrance door, tinted side windows, curtains, white.

VOLVO 1980 B58 PLAXTON SUPREME 12M, 53 E-type seats, autumn tint moquette, power entrance door, cream/brown.

VOLVO 1979 (LATE) B58 PLAXTON SUPREME 12M, air/leaf suspension, automatic gearbox, TELMA retarder, 51 recliners, autumn tint moquette, power entrance door, side lockers, all white.

COACH

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12 News Feature: Bill Godwin reports on how Neoplan is looking to the future with a new low-cost Transliner coach and to the past with the opening of its own museum.



Looking back at Neoplan - page 12

14 Fleet Update: Eleven new Volvo B10M/Plaxton Derwent vehicles join the Your Bus service fleet; Greater Manchester-based Bluebird takes delivery of two new Iveco 49.10s; Target Travel, of Cramlington, scores with a new EOS.

16 PSV: Looking at a West Country PSV centre reporting a business boom.

17 Diary: BCC president John Owen falls foul of some mums; a passenger puts Alan Howes in the picture.

18 Letters: There's more discussion on bonding; another record claim; and comment on the contrast between bus manufacturing and operating between mainland Britain and Northern Ireland.

20 On Target: Marksman says operators are well advised to make contingency plans so they are not left facing ruin because of unexpected bills.



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22 *COVER STORY In Service: Rod Davey goes on a 'beer run' to Belgium in a DAF/Plaxton 3200.

25 Profile: Looking at a small, Skegness operator which works in splendid isolation. Rod Davey reports.

29 Licensing & Legal: Hills (Tredegar) has its licence authorisation cut after suffering a series of maintenance problems; a West Yorkshire operator retains his PSV operator's licence despite being jailed for tax evasion; there's a delay in the introduction of new regulations regarding PSV driving licences.

32 Tourism: There's a new guide out for 1991 home holidays; details of trips to the Somme and Austria; and Leicester labels itself 'the birthplace of tourism.'



A small operator with a big reputation - page 25

COMMENT

THE support of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders for this industry's needs is both significant and perfectly timed.

The SMMT counts among its members some of the most influential car manufacturers and importers in this country. But nevertheless, it recognises the valuable role PSVs play in an integrated transport system.

It has been forthright and constructive in its approach, making appeals for specific changes in local and central government control of traffic to allow easier movement of buses - and, not forgetting entirely the bulk of its membership, cars.

Support for the bus and coach has come, too, from Surrey County Council. And from a Sussex MP anxious to see the Bus and Coach Council's pilot traffic schemes in operation.

Buses Mean Business is the message of BCC's major campaign. But the effects of current transport policy - or lack of it - are all too obvious to the consumer. For example, despite sterling effort from a number of progressive operators, investment in new, green buses is behind the times.

Profits are low, and now drivers are up in arms in many areas of the country as they struggle to get pay awards of more than the rate of inflation. Unfortunately, strikes such as those in Manchester and North Wales do little more than undermine the public's confidence in public transport.

Bus and coach operators do not want it all their own way. Like car users, they merely need enough road to get to work and so support the aims of environmentalists and passengers together. The problem of congestion is one which can be solved with the right tools.

New Transport Minister Malcolm Rifkind arrives at the Department of Transport in the middle of this tide of pro-bus public opinion. His ineffectual predecessor was forced to at least accept the validity of this argument. It is up to Mr Rifkind to act upon it.

If, like so many Transport Secretaries before him, he fails to grasp the nettle, the consequences will be dire. Britain will gradually clot up and the bus manufacturing and operating sector will haemorrhage jobs.

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■ VIDEO LICENSING

Detectives hunt licence dodgers

PLAIN-clothes detectives are on the prowl for video licence dodgers, warns a new company which hires films legally.

Ian MacDonald Associates says copyright watchdogs the Federation Against Copyright Theft Limited employs ex-police detectives to

track down operators who do not buy one of two licences for public showings of videos.

'Persons found guilty of committing such an offence are liable, on summary conviction, not only to receive a fine, but a maximum sentence of six months' imprisonment,' says IMA.

'Our research shows that very few operators are using licensed videos,' said managing director David Hearle. 'We suspect many operators are unaware of the risk they run when they show a non-licensed video on a coach.'

Licences are available from Phonographic Performance Limited and the Performing Rights Society, but IMA says it can solve much

of the donkey-work by supplying new releases from just £2 a day.

'These videos can be shown legally. A further advantage is that an operator can advertise the film he will be showing - a useful marketing idea for long-distance coaches,' says the firm.

● *Contact Ian MacDonald Associates at 12 Church Road, Hove, East Sussex. Tel: 0273 821778.*

■ EXPRESS SERVICES

NatEx talks go-ahead

NATIONAL Express is re-negotiating contracts with a number of operators - including Badgerline Holdings.

A Badgerline spokesperson refused to comment on industry rumours of a Badgerline Express network if present negotiations failed. However, a National Express spokesman suggested that it is normal for National Express to be in discussions about contracts because

agreements with individual operators terminate at differing times.

As part of a radical restructuring plan, National Express cut 55 jobs and replaced area control centres (Coachmart 610 October 18, 1990) with the introduction of the current winter timetable which runs until April 27. Replacement summer schedules are in the process of being compiled.

■ CHARITY

Plaxton tour helps charity

PLAXTON'S retail sales operation has raised £1,500 for Children in Need with a nationwide fund-raising tour aboard a demonstration coach. The Plaxton 3500 called at 40 locations for cash support, and made street collections.

Diesel came from Grampian Regional Transport, Northumbria Motor Services, Rossendale Transport, Capital Coaches, Castleways, and Parks of Hamilton.



Colin Cowdery (left), managing director of Plaxton Retail Sales: celebrating with cash collectors Bob Laird and Joan Wainwright.

■ VANDALISM

Reliance hit by vandal attack



Reliance: Vandalism overworked rest of fleet.

KENT operator Reliance, of Gravesend, fell victim to the ultimate in vandalism when a Rambo-like yobbo filled a coach full of lead.

Every one of the Plaxton 3200's windows, and the windows of a nearby lorry, were shot to pieces while it was parked overnight in Rochester, putting the vehicle off the road for a week.

'Police have no idea who did it,' said the firm's manager John Brookman. 'They said it looked as if a small-bore gun had been used, but no-one reported any shooting that night.'

The coach was due to go to Bournemouth the next day, but instead was hauled in to await new glass. Autoglass came to the rescue and fitted the windows.

'I've had to hire in a number of vehicles,' said Mr Brookman. 'I'll be glad to see the coach again!'

■ LATE NEWS

● WESTERN National drivers have been balloted for industrial action following a two-stage pay offer from the company.

Badgerline-owned Western National, based in Truro, has offered an 8.5 percent settlement to bus drivers, but just 4 percent to its coach drivers. The ballot results will not be known until this weekend.

A Western National spokesman was unavailable for comment when Coachmart went to press on Monday.

● THE Bus and Coach Council has welcomed the appointment of new Transport Minister Malcolm Rifkind, and says he will help speed transport legislation through Parliament.

The former Secretary of State for Scotland steps in where Cecil Parkinson left off, but will enjoy the working relationship with the industry which Parkinson built, said a BCC spokesman.

'Mr Parkinson did help build a relationship with the BCC, and was always willing to listen,' he said. 'Malcolm Rifkind's appointment is excellent news. He is a tough Edinburgh lawyer whose baptism into politics has been one of fire. We are sure he will help guide transport legislation.'

The BCC is pleased that junior ministers such as Roger Freeman remain in place: 'It seems that every time there's a shake-down in Government, the DTp bites the dust.'

● CVE Omni production is scheduled to end this week pending a buyer being found for the Shildon, Co Durham, production plant which is in receivership.

Although stocks of new and part-used vehicles remained unsold, receivers Price Waterhouse ensured completion of all confirmed Omni orders under the guidance of senior manager Peter Gibson.

Regarding possible continuity of production, Mr Gibson said: 'We have had discussions and are talking to a number of people.' A spares and repairs service is retained.

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

GMB faces more drivers' strikes

GREATER Manchester Buses faced further one-day strikes as *Coachmart* went to press, despite a threat to withdraw a seven percent pay offer from

drivers if action was taken.

Managing director Alan Westwell last week said the offer, in the face of a £7 million cost-cutting exercise, was fair. He also said a second condition of the offer was that it would be accepted by December 5.

But a day after the ultimatum, 3,200 drivers staged a one-day strike in defiance of GMB, bringing bus commuter traffic to a halt and overloading the rail services.

'GM Buses was later prepared to give a 48-hour 'amnesty' to the original ultimatum,'

said a GMB spokesman. 'We felt the unions and members had not had time to consider the offer carefully.'

GMB says it is losing between £200,000 and £300,000 in revenue during each strike.

● The Office of Fair Trading said its inquiries into GMB and Bee Line Buzz Company were at an early stage.

The call for an investigation came from Stockport Tory MP Tony Favell, who accused GMB of anti-competitive practice. He said fares were artificially low, and this



Alan Westwell: Ultimatum to strikers.

had resulted in GMB's losses.

An OFT spokesman said director general Sir Gordon Borrie had

agreed with Mr Favell to follow up his claims, but the situation did not yet merit the term 'investigation.'

BRIEFS

● **BUS and Coach Training** has called for closer co-operation from Government training initiatives. The BCC stand-alone company says an integrated system of National Vocational Qualifications would help lift their image and the standard of training.

● **DEREK Edwards** - a well-known figure in sales and marketing - died in his sleep last week. The well-respected self-employed consultant - who was working for Carlyle Bus Centre, but had also worked for Robin Hood and MAN - leaves a widow and family.

● **UNIFORM** supplier Cimara has been signed up by Lowland Scottish for the next three years. The company is to supply the 200 drivers with jackets, trousers, ties, shirts and anoraks to boost the image of newly-privatised Lowland.

● **LONDON General** has won nine tendered LT routes under three-year contract in central and south-west London. The Wandsworth-area routes will use double-decks from spring of next year.

● **SELKENT** has won the Euston-Waterloo-Greenwich route 188 from Boro'line of Maidstone... but Boro'line has picked up route 272 from Thamesmead to Woolwich and has increased frequency.

EMPLOYMENT

Workers accept 9% pay offer

PLYMOUTH Citybus workers have accepted a nine percent pay offer despite the threat of industrial action and an overtime ban to pursue a 10.6 percent claim.

A spokesman for the company said the pay claim had been dropped, and the 247 drivers had done a U-turn after voting in favour of action.

Citybus managing director Brian Fisher said any action would result in redundancies.

EMPLOYMENT

Gulf crisis blamed for job cuts

THE Gulf crisis is blamed for severe cut-backs at North Western Road Car's Skelmersdale depot.

North Western announced 37 redundancies, including 34 drivers - nearly one-third of the Skelmersdale road staff. Virtually all commercial early morning and late evening services will be withdrawn and day-time local services have been revamped to make best use of existing resources.

Administration manager Derek Bowes told *Coachmart* that one of the main reasons

was the high cost of operation following the Gulf crisis. He said: 'Company-wide the cost is in the region of £60,000 per four week cycle.'

The severity of the pre-Christmas job losses could be softened through natural wastage and re-location - four drivers will move to Warrington depot. However, further cuts by the Merseyside-based 400 vehicle operation could not be ruled out. Mr Bowes said: 'We are looking at service revisions throughout the company.'

LONDON TRANSPORT

Smoking to be banned on London buses

ALL buses on London Transport routes become no-smoking areas from Valentine's Day, February 14, next year.

Explaining the ban, London Buses' managing director Clive Hodson said: 'We hope Londoners will welcome the ban on smoking because buses will be cleaner, healthier and safer. Unlike Underground users, bus passengers can smoke while waiting at bus stops. With the

average journey taking only 15 minutes, we hope most smokers will not find it difficult to comply with the ban.'

London Buses and all other companies operating under contract to London Transport are affected. Smoking is currently allowed at the rear of the upper deck on London's 4,350 double-deckers, but it is already banned on almost 1,000 single-deck buses and midibuses.

The move is supported by London Buses' research showing that on average 73 percent of all adults support a ban and that the proportion of passengers actually smoking on buses has fallen to only 18 percent.

Earlier bans on Underground and Network South East suburban services result in smoking being forbidden on nearly all public transport in the capital.

PEOPLE

Brian Noton leaves National Welsh

NATIONAL Welsh managing director Brian Noton left the company on Tuesday of last week during crucial negotiations with unions.

The company's board and its financial advisors 3i are now discussing an austerity package with four unions in the remaining western part of National Welsh, and waiting for the ink to dry on a deal with Western Travel (*Coachmart* 615, November 22).

Mr Noton's sudden departure was confirmed by operations manager Ian Moncrieff, but he would not give the reasons for the

move: 'I am only prepared to say that he is no longer managing director,' he said. Mr Noton continues to be a non-executive director of the holding company.

The remaining western operations of National Welsh are still being heavily re-worked to make them more healthy, said Mr Moncrieff, but he would not comment on rumours of their sale either to staff or to Stagecoach.

Cuts of £1 million are being imposed to save the loss-making Valleys services - with a 7.5 percent pay cut for its double-deck drivers; loss of a week's holiday; and cuts in sick pay.



Ian Moncrieff: staying quiet on rumours of sale of western operations.

Although management had originally asked for a 13.5 percent pay cut on the basic rate, the present survival plan is estimated to cost the drivers around £20 per week.

Councils in the Valleys have hit out at what they describe as the deteriorating levels of service. 'National Welsh are quite unable or unwilling to meet the needs of the travelling public in terms of service provision,' said Rhymney Valley District Council chief executive Peter Bennet.

But Welsh Secretary David Hunt said: 'The opportunity is there for other services to come in should National Welsh cease to operate on any of their present routes.' The Welsh Office feels Mid Glamorgan County Council is able to subsidise commercially unattractive services.

BRIEFS

● **WELSH** operator Bebbs is stepping up its Cardiff Express Service between the city and Beddau to a 15 minute frequency in rush hours and a half-hourly service at other times between Monday and Saturday. The Llantwit Fardre operator says workers and shoppers use the route.

● **BRISTOL** manufacturer Bulwark Transport Engineering is sending 21 new bus bodies to Mozambique in kit form.

The firm - recently bought by management - is expecting contracts with the South-East African nation to continue for another three years.

Its relationship with Mozambique started earlier this year when Bulwark sent out parts for three prototype buses used for staff of the National Bank of Mozambique.

● **ROTTERDAM's** municipal transport company RET has ordered 40 advanced SB220 citybuses from United Bus member DAF Bus BV, with bodying to come jointly from Berkhof and Den Ouden.

The low-emission engines and electronic speed and throttle controls will combine with kneeling facility and double-glazing to meet the needs of environmentalists and passengers.

● **VOITH** transmissions fitted in Strathclyde Buses' 30 Leyland Olympians have now reached almost a quarter of a million miles service each... and Strathclyde has decided on the fitting of a further 16 Voith hydrocyclic transmissions to its vehicles.

● **QUESTIONNAIRES** due to be inserted in last week's *Coachmart* did not get in but our offer of a £250 draw to encourage a good response still stands. We have extended the deadline to December 13, so that you are in with a chance of an early Christmas present!

MAINTENANCE

Spare parts price pledge

COACH spares at low cost is the promise of Coachcare - a new firm set up by former Carlyle worker Stephen Dunn.

The Halesowen distributor says he is aware of the problems and prices faced by independent operators and is carefully targeting his service at them. Mr Dunn says his firm can supply Volvo, Mercedes, DAF, Van Hool, Neoplan, MCW, Scania, Ford, Bedford, Leyland and AEC spares at prices

which undercut many agencies.

'We already have £30,000 worth of running gear parts and are awaiting orders direct from manufacturers,' said Mr Dunn, managing director of the firm, which set up in September.

The private individual is not well catered for. At a time when fleet replacement is not easy because of interest rates, there is a need for a spares service,' he said.

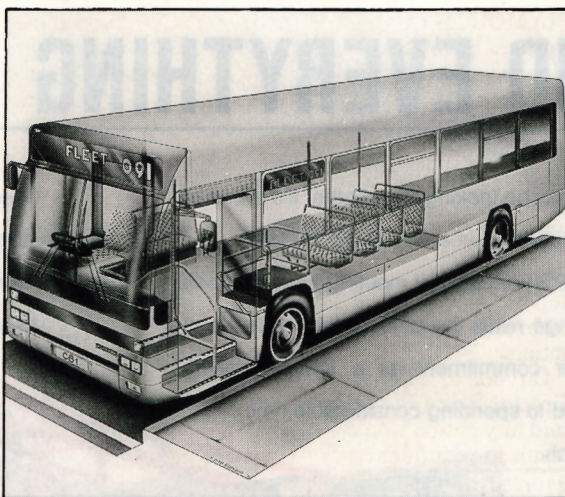
Next-day delivery by courier is the current arrangement, with van delivery in the Midlands. But Coachcare is hoping to have a more comprehensive network of van deliveries by the end of 1991.

● *Coachcare is at Unit A, Phase II, Mucklow Trading Estate, Mucklow Hill, Halesowen, nr Birmingham. Tel: 021 585 6989. Fax: 021 585 6217.*



Stephen Dunn: targeting service at independent operators.

NEW VEHICLE



New Plaxton bus: 52-seater is all-aluminium.

Plaxton service bus due out soon

PLAXTON has released details and drawings of its new service bus, due to be launched in spring of this year.

The single-deck 52-seater is being built on Scania 113 rear-engined chassis at Plaxton's Scarborough works, but the firm says its £3 million investment in computerised design technology will allow

the use of more chassis by summer.

Plaxton Citybus is an all-aluminium construction, 11.4 metre bus with wide entrance and DiPTAC specification. Small corner panels front and rear are in GRP for easy replacement, while windows are rubber-mounted for fast replacement.

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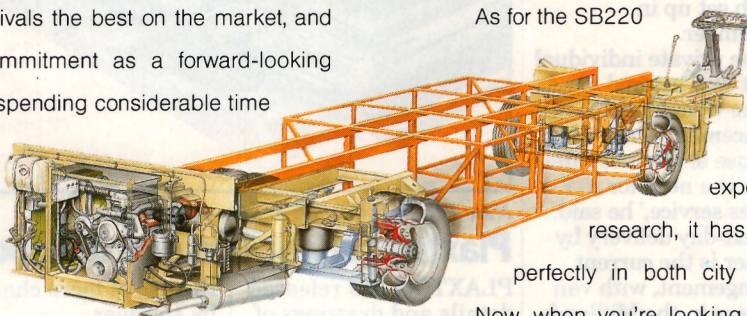
Of equal importance is ATi, a driveline philosophy that's already shown itself to be a major factor in achieving optimum fuel economy.

As for the SB220

City Bus, it is an entirely new concept in bus engineering and design.

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BUS

Government slammed over PSV policy

ONE OF Britain's most influential motor industry societies has slammed poor Government support for the PSV industry and demanded measures to boost bus use.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders - which has a high proportion of car industry members - has backed the bus and coach as the future of public transport, following in the footsteps of car industry giants such as Volvo and Ford.

It says:

- Government aid to the industry has fallen by 46 percent in just four years, while passenger mileage has increased;
- Only 11 percent of UK bus and coach operators' revenue comes from public funds, against 70 to 80 percent elsewhere in the EC;
- The industry is

desperate for more revenue, registration of new vehicles having fallen by almost half in ten years. Investment of £290 million last year needed to be boosted to £500 million to maintain fleet age profiles.

The damning report says the Government is failing the public by its lack of investment, which could bring the environmental benefits of recently-developed 'green' buses.

'Postponed purchase of new vehicles means passengers continue to be denied the benefits of major new advances,' it says. 'Buses are seen as dirty and inefficient. They are increasingly ignored as a solution to urban transport problems.'

Solutions to the problem include encouraging local authorities to take vehicle replacement into



Bus travel: Government is failing the country, says SMMT.

account when awarding tendered contracts, taking measures to build better urban bus lanes, and adding incentives for cleaner buses to fuel tax rebates.

'These areas are matters of public policy which only Government intervention can influence. The UK is

unique in Europe in failing to encourage the role of the bus in an integrated transport system,' says the report.

On fuel, the SMMT calls for legislation to control quality and reduce sulphur content so that new engine developments can eliminate almost all pollutants from

emissions: 'The industry's aim now is to reach levels so low they will be technically difficult to detect.'

● *Public Service Vehicles - Buses and Coaches on the Move in Britain* is available from the SMMT at Forbes House, Halkin Street, London SW1X 7DS. Tel: 071 235 7000.

TRAFFIC SCHEMES

Transport initiative is launched in Surrey

SURREY County Council last week launched a ten-year transport plan which includes park and ride schemes, and flexible school and working hours.

The document follows a year's research into environmental problems caused by congestion, and admits Surrey cannot currently meet demand for transport. Car availability is 50 percent higher than the national average.

'To enhance the important role of public transport and encourage greater usage, strengthened links between the county council, British Rail and bus operators would be necessary, says the council, adding that enhancement of limited stop bus and coach commuter



MP Andrew Bowden: pressing for £2 million from BCC scheme.

services would be one of the aims.

Among the package of measures would also be bus priority schemes, park and ride in Guildford, Camberley and Epsom, and better bus stations in Redhill, Guildford and Staines.

As Coachmart went to press, the joint managing director of London & Country, John Piper, said he was due to discuss the report, but had not yet had time to fully examine the changes it would bring: 'We were

involved in discussions with Surrey County Council when the report was put together but I am not in a position to discuss it yet.'

● A Sussex MP is backing the Bus and Coach Council's Buses Mean Business

initiative and is hoping his constituency will get a £2 million share of the £17.5 million in pilot schemes it proposes.

Kemp Town MP Andrew Bowden says Brighton could show the rest of the country how buses can solve environmental and social problems caused by congestion.

'I will be meeting the Minister for Public Transport Roger Freeman and the Minister for Roads and Traffic before the parliamentary recess,' he said. 'I will be urging them to respond positively by providing Government funding for all demonstration projects.'

'I hope that the local authorities will fully support the bus operators in this bold initiative.'

■ ANNUAL
REPORTS**Volvo Group
reports a loss**

THE mighty Volvo Group made a loss of £18 million in the nine months up to the end of September this year. Turnover was £5.83 billion - down from £6.15 billion in the same period in 1989.

Volvo bus and coach sales were down during the nine months, but Volvo's share of the Western Europe PSV market remained unchanged. Although Volvo will not split its accounts into separate areas of operation, its interim report says Volvo Buses reported 'substantially lower earnings than in the first three quarters last year, due partly to losses on operations in Great Britain.'

The group's loss came after provisions for restructuring costs amounting to £229 million. These costs cover cutbacks in production and a reduction of around 5,000 workers - mainly on the car operations - during the current year and next year.

■ INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Crosville keeps its PSVs on the road

CROSVILLE Wales reached its target of 28 PSVs working in Wrexham last week despite claims by the union that it would not get drivers.

Of the 124 sacked Wrexham employees, 20 had now got jobs with the pruned-down operation, said

Crosville Wales managing director John Rimmington. A further 30 had got work elsewhere, but 'pickets' are still standing at the gates of the Mold Road depot, due to be closed (*Coachmart* 616, November 29).

As part of its attempt to move towards

profitability, the company has extended an offer of single fares for return journeys in off-peak times, and has successfully re-tendered for work it lost.

'We now have 34 staff working, with more drivers as they take their tests after intensive driver

training,' said Mr Rimmington. 'We've got to win back the bits of business we can.'

Mr Rimmington said there was no trouble at the company's other depots, with negotiations with unions at Llandudno Junction now nearing agreement.

■ PRIVATISATION

Uncertainty hit bus company sales

A QUARTER of all NBC bus companies sold went to single bids of well below asset value, the National Audit Office confirmed last week.

Poor publicity for the sale coupled with uncertainty in the run-up to a General Election paved the way for 36 of the 62 NBC subsidiaries to go for less than the value of property and vehicles, says the NAO report. Most single-bid sales

came before February 1987.

'There was no established market for the sale of bus companies, and deregulation and the proposed changes to the subsidy regime raised doubts about the future profitability of the many subsidiaries,' comments the NAO.

'As a consequence, the sale of the company (NBC) was initiated at a time of great uncertainty for the

industry. The sale and the confidence in the market was also influenced by the impact of the General Election which took place in June 1987, midway through the sale period.'

The NAO report should have been seen some time ago, but the original report prepared by the NAO was returned for revision by the Department of Transport. The DTP also attempted to have

company sales facts put in a confidential memo, but were overruled by the NAO.

Clawback arrangements to prevent asset stripping have so far produced £11 million in receipts, £6 million of which has gone back to the taxpayer.

● *Source, Department of Transport: Sale of National Bus Company, report by the comptroller and auditor general. HMSO £5.45.*

■ MAINTENANCE

Lifts can put your business on the up

CLEANER working conditions, reduced down-time and improved use of workshop space are the claimed advantages of mobile vehicle lifts.

Stevensons, of Uttoxeter, fleet engineer Mark Bowd claims 20 percent more vehicles per week can be handled. Leyland

Leopard engine changes take 16 hours - half as much time as when working over a pit.

Rear axles take up to eight hours instead of two or three days.

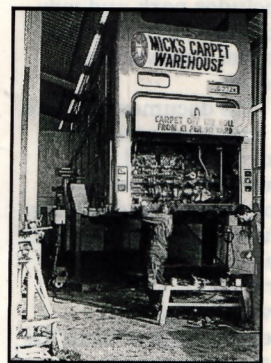
Two new sets of five tonne Somers mobile lifts at Stevensons' Burton upon Trent workshops have

improved maintenance conditions for fitters handling 50 vehicles per week. These include 36 Metrobuses with air suspension.

Matthew Evans, garage manager, said: 'On Metrobus diffs, we just lift the bus and they are very easy to get at. Axles are available from all sides,

engines and gear boxes can be lowered safely on to a trolley and it is easier to line-up a trolley when re-fitting a gearbox.'

The first set of four lifts supplied to Stevensons in 1975 have been refurbished by Somers for continued use at its Uttoxeter depot.



A Stevensons' Somers lift: enables more vehicles to be handled.

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M.A.N. 10.180 - ALGARVE. 35 recliners, courier seat, continental door, Blaupunkt stereo, full soft trim **£69,500**
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87 (E) IVECO 79.14	CAETANO VIANA	19 seats	£23,500
87 (E) BEDFORD YMP	PARAMOUNT 3200	35 seats, power door	£44,950
87 (D) DAF SB 2300	DUPL 340	57 recliners	£67,500
87 (D) TOYOTA	CAETANO OPTIMO GL	19 seats, power door	£25,950
86 (C) BEDFORD YNV	PARAMOUNT 3200	52 seats, toilet, servery	£48,500
86 (C) DAF	BOVA FUTURA FLD	53 recliners, d.glazed	£62,500
86 (C) M.A.N. 8.136	REEVE BURGESS	32 seats, power door	£29,950
85 (C) DAF MB200	CAETANO ALGARVE	53 seats (retrimmed)	£55,000
85 (B) FIAT 60.10	CAETANO BEJA	18 seats, power door	£14,500
84 (A) DAF	BOVA CALYPSO	53 recliners, power door	£42,500
84 (A) DAF MB 200	DUPL LASER I	57 seats, power door	£42,500
83 (PP) LEYLAND TIGER 245	PARAMOUNT 3500	49 recliners, Exec.	£46,950
83 (Y) AEC 760 11m S/A	SUPREME V	45 recliners	£27,500
82 (PP) DAF	BOVA EUROPA II	52 recliners, power door	£37,500
82 (X) LEYLAND TIGER 218	PLAXTON VIEWMASTER	49 recliners, Exec.	£36,500
81 (W) AEC 760 11m S/A	PLAXTON SUPREME IV	53 seats, power door	£19,950
81 (PP) MAN	SR280	48 recliners, toilet	£26,500
81 (PP) LEYLAND LEOPARD	PLAXTON SUPREME IV	50 recliners, power door	£25,950
81 (W) LEYLAND LEOPARD	DUPL DOMINANT III	57 seats, power door	£26,950

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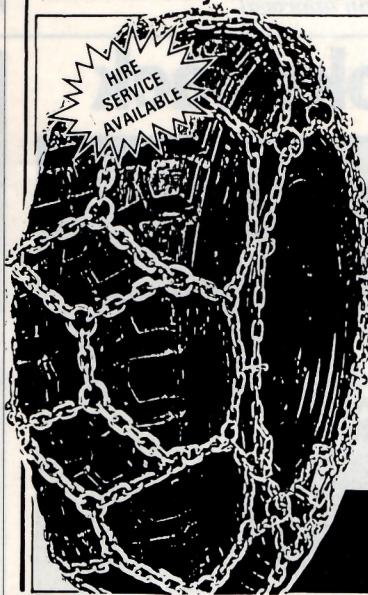
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Transliner to head east

Neoplan opened its doors to the public and showed off its Transliner coach. Bill Godwin was there to see it.

NEOPLAN has unveiled a new low-cost Transliner coach - due to be made in left-hand drive for the UK market - and revealed plans to expand into eastern Germany.

The Stuttgart manufacturer had several surprises in store at its open days in Germany, including a carbon-fibre low-floor bus still being designed, and the new coach (Coachmart 616, November 29).

It revealed that production at its plants is up more than 10 percent, much of the growth being down to the coach market. To keep up the

momentum, it has upgraded many of its vehicles.

The Jetliner SHD is now raised higher to create more luggage space, and a new Cityliner, 3.76 metres high, gets a ski carrier over the rear axle. The Transliner range also gets a high-deck version, raised to 3.59 metres.

The Transliner due to come to Britain is being heavily marketed in eastern Germany. The vehicle is built to a skeletal level by the West Berlin factory and completed in eastern Germany by three new partners. Heavy investment by Neoplan sees a new assembly hall at the Hiller plant in Ehrenhain

opened by the end of the month.

The low-floor MIC Carbonliner bus, with its reinforced plastic construction, is already gaining European approval, with 100 units being built in 1991. So far, 18 of the high-technology buses are in

service, including the test vehicle which was crashed 'to destruction' to satisfy European regulations.

Among other exhibitors at Neoplan's mini exhibition was MWM Deutz with an experimental new water-cooled engine which attracted a great deal of interest.

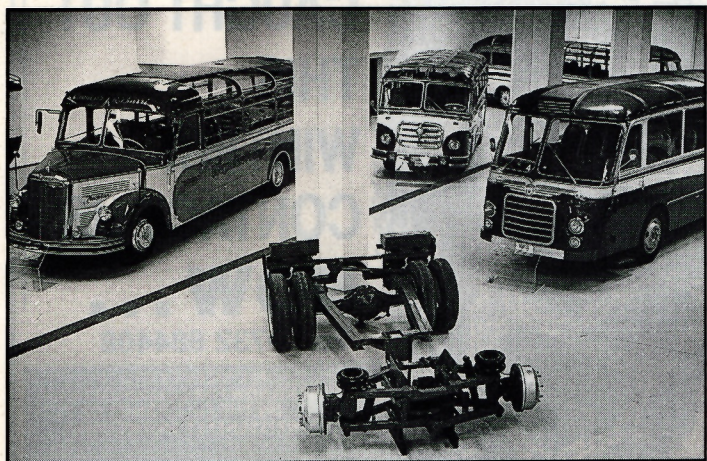


The Carbonliner: gaining European approval.



Neoplan Transliner: a new economy model is available in this high-floor version.

Neoplan looks back



A 1950 Mercedes-Benz based 29 seater (left), a Swiss 'narrow gauge' forward control coach (centre) and 1956 Neoplan SH 7/8 behind an early front and rear axle example.

A NEW museum of Neoplan history since the early days of 1935 has been opened in an extension of the manufacturer's main office.

A large number of exhibits include a sightseeing double-deck used for seeing over

the Berlin Wall in 1965, and a two metre wide coach built by the founding Auwarter family for the Swiss on a Mercedes Benz truck chassis.

Neoplan's versatility is illustrated by a



1954 coach built to Swiss width requirements of 2.25m.

wooden hand-cart built at the factory during a quiet period in the 1950s. Gottworp Auwarter turned his company's hand to railway carriages, too, when times were tough.

LOOK AT IT

THIS WAY

A bus or coach is only as good as the chassis upon which it is built.

After all, it's the chassis which supports the bodywork and passengers, cushions them from road shocks, guides them comfortably through congested streets, speeds them along the open highway, stops them safely.

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It's the engine, gearbox, drive-train and chassis weight which determine fuel efficiency.

The user benefits are clear.

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Once seen, never forgotten

A NEW EOS has joined the fleet of Target Travel in Cramlington, Northumberland. It is Target Travel's first vehicle from the former LAG factory and joins the company's small fleet of executive coaches.

The EOS is being used to carry incoming Norwegian visitors on tours of Britain. It is also used on business private hires. Target Travel director John Reed said: 'If we show the coach - or sometimes even just a photograph - to potential business clients and explain the features it has, we are able to hire the EOS at a premium rate.'

The EOS is built to a comprehensive standard specification which includes reclining seats, tinted double glazing, centre sunken toilet, driver's bunk and fridge. The integral construction incorporates independent front suspension with front disc brakes. It is powered by a 345 bhp DAF DKX ATi turbocharged and intercooled engine which drives through a ZF 6S-150C close ratio gearbox.



Travellers picks Deaуilles



TONY Grayson (pictured right), of Travellers Coach Company Ltd, took delivery of the latest additions to the fleet from Arthur Humphries, of Jonckheere UK Ltd.

The two Volvo B10M GL Deaуilles are painted in Travellers' distinctive silver, with white, red and blue centre bands.

Both vehicles are finished to a high executive standard which includes 51 Vogel Quadro 3000 seats, rear sunken demountable toilet, continental exit, double glazed side windows, Blaupunkt Munchen '400' radio/PA/cassette system, TV/video, Suttrak air conditioning, refrigerator, drinks machine, full interior soft trim and carpeting to the complete saloon floor.

The new coaches will be used on Travellers' incoming tour programme. Established in 1984, the company operates a fleet of 30 full-size coaches and two 18-seat Caetano Optimos from Hounslow, Middlesex.



Ivecos fly into Bluebird

GREATER Manchester-operator Bluebird has added two new Iveco 49.10s to its fleet of small vehicles. The latest buses feature 23-seat Carlyle bodywork. They join eight other Ivecos, which run alongside Renault and Talbot.

A full-size Leyland Leopard/Willowbrook is used on subsidised night service 164 from Manchester Piccadilly to Langley with supporting runs on commercial service 112 from Middleton into Manchester. This local service opportunity was spotted by Bluebird partner and general manager Mike Dunstan.

A former employee of Greater Manchester Buses and more recently supervisor for Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive at Piccadilly, Mr Dunstan acquired Bluebird with his father, Tom, and wife Moira, two years ago.

The direction of this three coach operation was quickly transformed to its present emphasis on bus operation. Mr Dunstan told *Coachmart*: 'We are a victim of our own success. Our 21/25 seat minibuses are often full to capacity.'

He was scathing of recent lightning strikes by Greater Manchester Buses' drivers. 'It's just another example of narrow minded GMB management and trade unions,' he said.

You've been buying...You've been buying...You've been buying...You've been buying...You've

Tigers go on the prowl in Lincolnshire



PICTURED with the latest Leyland Tiger 245 to join south Lincolnshire operator Delaine's Coaches is managing director Hugh Delaine-Smith.

Delaine's was one of the first to take advantage of Plaxton's autumn used vehicle sale when it purchased the former London Country North East Tiger/Duple Dominant IV - new April 1983.

Six similar coaches with consecutive registrations were acquired between October 1988 and November 1989, but the seventh differs not only by being out of sequence, but by having bus seating.

Plaxton Sales replaced the 46 recliners previously fitted, making the former coach an attractive proposition for local service work.

Lettering for Delaine's Bourne-The Deepings-Peterborough service has been added at waist level to the two-tone blue and cream paintwork completed in the Bourne workshops. For the first time, computer designed vinyls have replaced traditional hand-signwriting. This method having been selected because of its speedier application and resistance to wear from the bus washing process.

The Tiger replaces a 1978 45-seat Bedford YLQ/Duple Dominant II, and gives the 20-vehicle operation greater vehicle rostering flexibility. With the exception of one Duple Laser-bodied Bedford YNT, the company has achieved fleet standardisation. It runs 13 Tigers and six Leyland double-deckers on service work, contracts and private hire.

Deltas go to the Potteries



PMT Ltd, of Stoke-on-Trent, now operates nine Optare Delta city buses based on DAF SB 220 chassis.

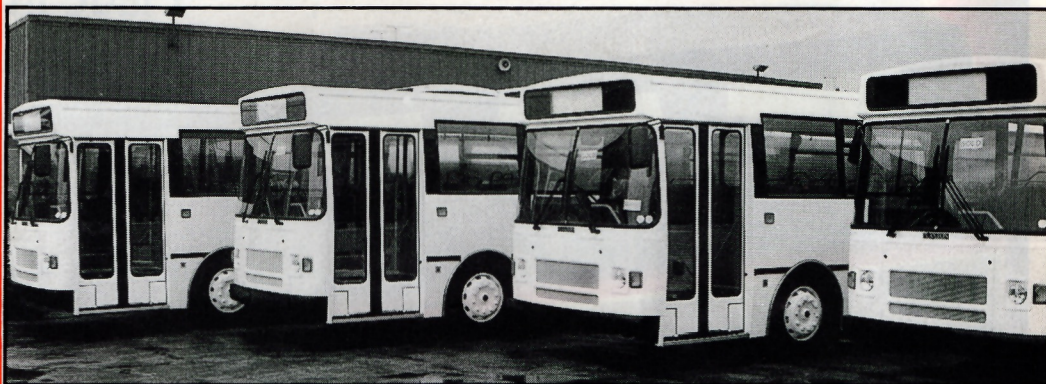
Each vehicle has 48 moquette trimmed coach seats. An additional 24 standing passengers can be carried. The saloon interior surfaces are a combination of hard-trim on the roof in

cloud blue and soft trim grey needle cord on the body sides. Floor covering is in dark grey Treadmaster.

The SB 220 is powered by an 11.6 litre turbo charged diesel engine which drives through either four or five speed ZF automatic gearbox with integral retarder. Full air suspension is fitted.

Optare uses Alusuisse body construction which is capable of giving the vehicle a life expectancy well in excess of 15 years. The extrusions are bolted together and the design enables the vehicle to be repaired quickly and easily from the outside in the event of accident damage.

More vehicles for Your Bus



SMITH'S Coaches (Shenington) Ltd has added 11 new Volvo B10M/Plaxton Derwent vehicles to its Your Bus service fleet.

The first four are seen ready for collection from Plaxton Sales at Anston. Although not in direct replacement, five former Scancoaches Scania/Jonckheere dual-door buses have now left the fleet.

Smith's director and manager Mike Smith told *Coachmart*: 'The opportunity to standardise on one body type was too great a feature to miss.' The latest vehicles boost the number of Derwent bodied buses to 19 - the others are on Leyland Tiger chassis.

Mr Smith claims 89.5 percent of the Your Bus fleet is now less than two and a half years old. Thirty vehicles are

required for five services in the Birmingham area (including city centre circulars A6Y and C6Y) and the new single deckers mark a reduced requirement for double-deckers. The deckers will be repainted and refurbished as part of an upgrading exercise, giving a surplus of 10 operational buses.

The latest vehicles are the first Volvo service buses, but coaches on this chassis are no strangers to the fleet. At present, only four coaches are owned. However, Mr Smith said: 'We will increase the number of coaches if we can get the right price for the work.'

Meanwhile, he said: 'Local bus work is quite interesting. It's your work... you get out of it what you put in.'

All roads lead to Exeter PSV

NEWLY- formed coach outlet Exeter PSV Centre is reporting scores of enquiries for its stock of 40 vehicles.

The sales outfit's owner Paul Nightingale says the reason for the interest is the location of the business – just a stone's throw from Exeter in

an area without a mainstream dealer.

'There is a big void around Exeter,' he told *Coachmart*. The gap has been created partly by Mr Nightingale's repossession of Greenslades' vehicles, removing them from operation in the West Country.

The former Greenslades vehicles form the base of the current stock, but Mr Nightingale is building the choice with vehicles bought from around Britain: 'Not that we expect a great number of sales before Spring, when operators will be upgrading their fleets for the summer season,' he said.

The facility offered by Nightingale includes workshops large enough to accommodate a double-deck coach – he has two for sale – on vehicle lifts: 'Buyers can inspect the vehicles as long as they let us know beforehand,'



1987 Leyland Tiger Duple 320SL
Executive: on sale from Exeter PSV for £67,500.



Pit and four-post lifts: helps the buyer inspect vehicles.

he told *Coachmart*.

The space Exeter PSV Centre has will lift it beyond some retail outlets. Mr Nightingale says he can take 75 vehicles in his premises, which were formerly a dairy but have had £2.5 million spent on redevelopment.

The development means Exeter PSV Centre can also offer maintenance and will soon be offering paint-

spraying to operators on a contract or one-off basis. Finance for vehicles can be arranged, and all vehicles offered will have a minimum six months' MOT.

'We could even arrange coach hire if anyone has need of a vehicle,' said Mr Nightingale. 'If operators phone us, I can give them a price for any similar arrangement.'

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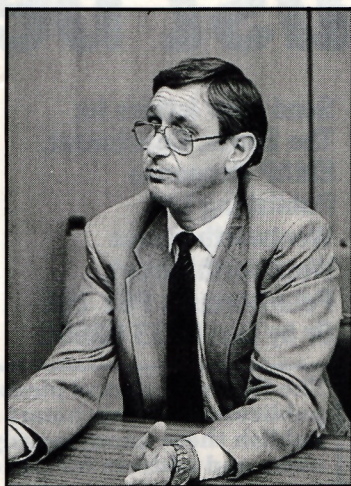
John meets formidable foes

NEW Bus and Coach Council president John Owen got his face in the papers the other day... but for the wrong reasons.

The friendly boss of municipal company Thamesdown has fallen foul of that most vitriolic of beasts, women. Hell hath no fury, etc...

The 'angry mums' say a local paper have raised a petition to oust John Owen's minibuses from a housing estate to get back their beloved double-decks. Queueing at the side of the road, they have been faced with full minibuses passing them by.

'Of course the vehicles are fairly heavily loaded because that's what we want,' said Mr Owen in his defence. However, the profit line doesn't interest Mrs Public, who simply wants somewhere to put her pushchair, Christmas presents, kid's, bottom, cuddly toy, conveyor belt...



'Who...me?'

Mealstop fears drivers at Thamesdown demanding danger money for trips through Pinehurst in Swindon before long. We think we'd rather send in the double-decks, and damn the cost.

● NO MATTER how important you think you are,

there's always someone around to bring you back to earth.

This little maxim was proved to Scottish Citylink managing director Alan Howes during a recent Christmas promotional 'shoot' for the Press.

Photogenic Mr Howes - a real live Howard Hughes for courting publicity - combed his hair and trimmed his beard to distinguish himself from Santa Claus - standing alongside a Citylink coach with traditional sack of empty cardboard boxes - and smiled at the assembled lensmen.

Enter stage right Mrs McTavish, straight into the line of fire while struggling with two carrier bags: 'Excuse me hen, is this no the bus foor Nottingham?', she asked. Fortunately, diplomacy prevailed

● CONGRATULATIONS to the Bus and Coach Council for effectively stifling the Press sensationalism linked



to the so-called 'EEC double-decker ban.'

Eager for the angle, the hacks were already writing off the Routemasters before they got in touch with the BCC. Fortunately the BCC had the facts to hand, and pointed out that there may well be a 25-year phase-out period.

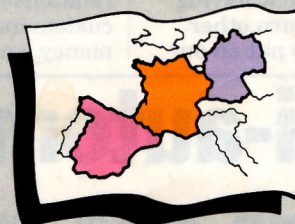
● WHO is Scottish, female, and knows quite a lot about the bus industry?

Exactly this question faced one of the *Coachmart* staff when he got a call from someone who qualified on all three counts: 'Hold the line Mrs Gloag,' he gleefully said, proud of his depth of knowledge.

He was talking to Scottish Citylink's public relations lady, Jill Donaldson...

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Perfection in coaches

The price *must* be right

From John Cook

SIR

As a small operator offering between 12 to 15 coach tours per year, I have read with interest the articles on bonding for tour companies, as no official papers have reached my office, the only news of this scheme is found through your columns (ref. Issue 614, November 15).

Apart from membership fees and subscriptions, annually the figure of at least £15,000 dependant on the risks involved makes me and probably a lot of other operators think twice about closing down a part of our company that's been around for nearly 50 years. If the above figures applied to us, it could mean we price ourselves out of the market.

I fully support the idea of security for customers, but cannot justify paying this sort of figure to someone, somewhere without having some form of return other than a symbol to put on our

letterheads.

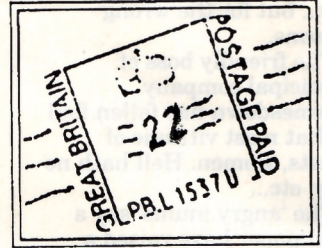
We have in the past offered customers security by means of accounts via building societies whereas they keep their own money right to the deadline. There must be some form of scale to help small operators instead of closing them down, unless that is the ultimate aim.

I for one would be prepared to negotiate with our bank to form a 'safe fund' whereas we deposit a sum large enough to cover customers holidays, topped up each year and 'untouchable' by the operator until retirement or sale, at least this type of security works both ways and the operator may be able to look forward to a good retirement as well.

Maybe other operators in a similar position will give their thoughts on this subject and look to the BCC for further information?

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Or by fax: 0733 62656**



The Editor is always pleased to receive letters for publication in Coachmart and will, if requested, publish these anonymously. But please attach your name and address for our own information.

receive payment whilst the group and coach are using the facilities, therefore gaining trust and a good reputation.

Should we ever need assistance in any emergency our hotels are only too willing to help, the large tour companies force down the price for the hotel/ferry because of the block booking system making it very difficult for the smaller companies to find new hotels and destinations without paying for wholesalers services, when and not if the

new EC Directives come into force, once again the small operators have to pay for the larger operator problems.

No doubt this letter may upset some big names if published, but let's not forget the operators who have the old fashioned values in today's hi-tech market, after all its the customers who pay the wages.

JOHN COOK
PROPRIETOR
COOK'S EUROPEAN
BIGGLESWADE
BEDFORDSHIRE

Semi-automatic Tigers are best

From Mr R McCulloch

SIR

In reply to T J Fogarty's letter in *Coachmart*, November 15 about the poor gear change on his Leyland Tiger coaches, I agree with him about the 'semi-automatic' being a lot easier for the driver.

I have been driving Leyland coaches for many years and the company who I drive for have a fleet of 'Leopards and Tigers.' They are all fitted with 'semi-automatic' type gearboxes. The Leopards have the five speed, pneumocyclic semi-automatic boxes and a two speed rear axle.

It must be said the gear change on the pneumocyclic is slow. The Tiger coaches have the hydraulic semi-automatic boxes and the gear change is very fast and smooth. It is interesting that Leyland offered semi-automatic gear boxes on their range of coaches for over 20 years, and it is a shame that since 1988 Leyland stopped making its own gear boxes and now it builds 'ZF' gear boxes.

MR R MCCULLOCK
241 NEWLANDS LANE SOUTH
MOORCLOSE ESTATE
WORKINGTON
CUMBRIA
CA14 3QQ

There should be fair play for all

From H D Liebner

SIR

I wonder if many readers of *Coachmart*, Issue 613 have noticed the contrast in bus manufacturing and operating between mainland Britain and Northern Ireland. In that issue we have two bus manufacturers expanding in Northern Ireland and two mainland Britain, two in either receivership or in cutting back operations.

Surely there must be something wrong to allow this unfair competition in the manufacturing industry and yet I have yet to hear from mainland Britain's manufacturers of this unfair

trading practice that Northern Ireland receive, not only in the form of a Capital Grant for new vehicles, but money given for expansion of their factories for export of bus bodies to mainland Britain.

After all, it's our taxes that are used for Northern Ireland and if the 'Black Taxi' type are such a problem out there, why doesn't this government simply ban the export of these vehicles.

H D LIEBNER
12 SHRUBBERY GARDENS
WINCHMORE HILL
LONDON
N21 2QT

Buenos Aires sounds like organised chaos

From N D G Mackenzie

SIR

In a recent issue, Professor John Hibbs speaks approvingly of the success of Mercedes 25 seater (sic) buses in providing the mainstream bus operations in Buenos Aires since the bankruptcy of the 'big bus' operator in 1962 and states this is a particularly relevant case.

My information on the matter comes from Jane's Urban Transport Systems

Another record claim

From D N Warren

SIR

Following Mr D J Hurry's letter regarding Premier Travel Services' claimed record, I am afraid we can go one better. In the Spring of 1989, this company operated an extended 'day trip' promotion to Paris with the *Sun* newspaper.

Over a period of some 12 weeks, in excess of 17,000 passengers were carried. On Friday May 12, 1989 32 coaches left the UK via Dover on the late evening sailings and 1,647 paying passengers were carried.

The fleet included four deckers and vehicles were supplied by various operators throughout the country.

May we now claim the record or does someone else know better!!

D N WARREN
MANAGING DIRECTOR
THE TRAVEL MARKET LIMITED
CHANNEL VIEW ROAD
DOVER
KENT
CT17 9TP

of 1989 which states that the 'Colectivo' minibuses account for 75 percent of public transport trips.

LRT also provides about 75 percent of public transport trips in Edinburgh. It is interesting to note that the population served in Buenos Aires is 16 times that served by us in Edinburgh. Each of the 13,000 minibuses, however, apparently covers only 34,600 kilometres annually whereas each of our 547 buses covers 59,200 kilometres annually.

Annual bus kilometres in Buenos Aires are 14 times what they are in Edinburgh, but annual seat-kilometres offered are just 4.3 times the Edinburgh figure.

Curiously, the average load in Buenos Aires seems to be 67, on buses with 23 seats.

However, I also read that

these 'Collectivos' are organised into an empresa for each route, a body which determines schedules and fares. Income is pooled and distributed in proportion to kilometres run. The Ministry of Public Works and Services oversees fares and minimum frequencies and governs the formation of new empresas.

Hardly the deregulated free-for-all so dear to the Professor's heart. I haven't been to Buenos Aires, but it also sounds like organised chaos, of a different kind perhaps.

N D G MACKENZIE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND
GENERAL MANAGER
LOTHIAN REGION
TRANSPORT PLC
14 QUEEN STREET
EDINBURGH
EH2 1JL

Premier puts record straight

From David J Hurry

SIR

In your edition of November 22, you included an article on page 5 about Lincoln City Transport. In it you indicated that Viscount of Peterborough had picked up some of LCT's National Express contracts.

Firstly, I would advise you that since July 1 this year Viscount has not operated any contracts for National Express, their operations on Service 470 passing to ourselves on that day, as we are now the Coaching Division of the Cambus Holdings Ltd Group.

Secondly, we have not 'picked up' any additional National Express operations as a result of LCT's withdrawal.

DAVID J HURRY
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
PREMIER TRAVEL SERVICES
PREMIER PARK
KING'S HEDGES ROAD
CAMBRIDGE
CB4 4PQ

NOSTALGIA CORNER



THIS print is from the fascinating collection of glass negatives that form part of the Dennis Brothers' records held by the Surrey Record Office.

Although not on public display, items from the records can be viewed by appointment on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Photographs are at the Guildford office, whereas vehicle plans are at Kingston upon Thames. Minute books also form part of the

collection, which traces Dennis' history back to the earliest days.

The Record Office acts as custodian for a number of business archives, while ownership remains in the hands of the company.

The 1911 Dennis bus features an unusual inclined floor with rather awkward rear entrance. It is pictured outside the premises of M Puttock & Son, Job Masters of Guildford.

Contingency plans may help save your business



READERS will be relieved that I am not going to bore them with my views on the present,

or past, Prime Minister's attributes or shortcomings.

Sufficient to record that at the moment I heard of Margaret Thatcher's decision to resign, I was on a modern industrial estate in Banbury watching a machine which embroiders emblems and company names onto 10 garments simultaneously.

The place, the premises and the machine very much epitomised the swift move to labour efficient, customer driven, profitability, towards which Thatcherism has propelled (most of) us.

I was more than a little impressed by the levels and variety of stocks held by Allen & Douglas, for that was where I was.

John Allen had told me that white was still the most popular driver uniform shirt colour and had shown me a flat, easily laundered and inexpensive headrest cover - which is held in place with just a Velcro strip.

He had just begun to tell me how the Inland Revenue looks like requiring all uniform garments to bear a company name if they are to be tax allowable and how an operator has already had a large claim for several years back tax made against him for not honouring this unknown 'rule'; when the news of the Prime Minister's resignation caused us to change the subject of the conversation.

I want to pick up that last matter, but to do so I will first digress to look at other examples of unexpected financial nasties.

For example, an operator of my acquaintance who, though as punctilious as anyone I know regarding driver hours observance, actually has a special bank account which

forms a contingency fund lest he should be the victim of a prosecution for any unintended, and possibly technical, breach of hours regulations.

I do not think I would wish to earmark with quite that precision money for a particular contingency, but totally accept and applaud the principle that many unknown and unforeseen circumstances can suddenly rear up their money-grasping hands.

To have no treasure chest is to take unnecessary risks on the walk across the business tight-rope.

To have no treasure chest at all to fund the unexpected is surely to take unnecessary risks on the walk across the business tight-rope.

Engines will fail, despite meticulous mechanical care; prosecutions and fines can befall even the most law abiding; the powerful Health & Safety Executive may enforce costly requirements on the most safety conscious and the Inland Revenue is just as likely to bring a test case against an honest trader as pick on a rogue.

A business with no contingency reserves could be brought to its knees by any of these things.

So beware, therefore, another nasty object lurking in their woodwork. Once again it concerns eligibility for fuel duty rebate.

Following some swift footing by Bus & Coach Council it now appears to be conceded by the Department of Transport that fare paying schoolchildren are 'members of the public' when deciding whether a bus service which is primarily designed to meet school peak hour needs is eligible for Fuel Duty Rebate.

Operators are no longer being hounded on this account. (But, quite unfairly, those who were compelled to repay rebate in this purge have not, as far as I am aware, had it reinstated. In the case of one small operator it cost him well into four figures).

Instead, officials of the Department of Transport have concocted two new, and unpublicised, rules of eligibility.

One is targeted at services registered to cater for school or works peak hour demand and is known as the 'Bus Queue Test'. In order to be eligible for FDR, either 50 percent of the seats, or at least some, (according to the nature of the service), must be available to the general public. The DTp takes the view that this requirement will not be met if any person at the front of a bus queue is refused travel in order to keep seats available for some other person, like a schoolchild or a factory worker, who may be further back in the queue (or even at the next bus stop).

Extending from the principles of the bus queue test, the department has also indicated to some operators that any limitations on the picking up or setting down of passengers at stops on route would, unless the restrictions were registered, remove a

service from eligibility.

The obvious examples of this are limited stop and 'linked' express services together with services running into conurbations where, in order to ensure capacity for the longer distance travellers, an operator imposes limitations on local travel within the conurbation.

For the future, revision of registrations to ensure that all services are available to the public at all registered

A DTp audit could cost operators thousands of pounds in fuel duty snatch-backs.

bus stopping points may be sensible.

But this will not correct the past and a Department of Transport audit could cost some operators tens of thousands of pounds in fuel duty rebate snatch-backs.

As legislation gets more complex, more besmirched with grey areas and fraught with unpublicised departmental 'rules', there is a compelling need for all operators to maintain a fund to meet the unknown contingency.

Failure to do so could have dire consequences.

No need to drown in debt

IN my own immediate area four operators of some substance have drowned in the storms of bankruptcy within the last six months, and a couple more look decidedly sea-sick. I have a sinking feeling that this picture is being repeated throughout the country.

'Bankruptcy - Inevitable or Avoidable', will be the theme title of a short series of articles I plan for these pages

in January.

In view of the frightening topicality of this subject, local associations seeking a subject for debate at meetings early next year might well care to dissect my thoughts at their gatherings.

Discussion of the unmentionable might well be a lifeboat for some, or at least limit the effect on the rest of us of the dangerous waves thrown up by those drowning.

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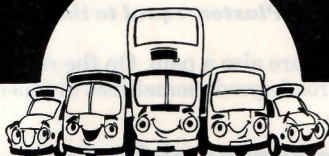
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1985 LEYLAND TIGER 245 DUPE CARIBBEAN II, 48 recliners plus courier, toilet, double glazed windows, curtains, **SOLD** tables, power door, driver's seat, twin fuel tanks, Eberspacher and driver bunk, MoT 21.3.91. Stock No. M011£31,500

1985 SCANIA K112 JONCKHEERE P50, 49 recliners, sunken toilet, o/s centre crank, driver's bunk, tinted windows, rollo blinds, MoT 19.£46,500 £35,000

1984 SCANIA K112 JONCKHEERE P50, 49/51/53 recliners, o/s sunken toilet, o/s centre continental door, driver's bunk, tinted windows, rollo blinds, MoT 1991. Stock Nos. M104, M105 & M106£41,500 £33,000

1977 FORD R1111 AXTON, 53 seats (Ford engine) power door, MoT 19.**SOLD** Stock No. M010£3,500

1975 BRISTOL VRT, (Gardner 180 engine), 74 seats ECW (low bridge) MoT's Feb & May 1991. Choice of two. Stock Nos. M012, M013£3,450 £2,950

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BOOZING IN BELGIUM

Rod Davey carries out an 'In Service' test on a DAF/Plaxton 3200 on a Belgian beer-run.

DIKSMUIDE may not be a destination which immediately reminds us of the jet-setting fraternity - but it's the destination for British imbibers of the hop when visiting Belgium.

Its anatomical position in Europe was described in a blunt and uncomplimentary fashion by one coach driver on the ferry home. But it copes with the need of a certain section of British tourists to feel part of a wider entity.

Promenaders may visit the 'Last Night of the Proms' to flag wave in the Albert Hall, but Diksmuide 'promenaders' are given the option of swaying to 'Land of Hope and Glory' played by an 'Oompah Band' on a revolving stage in a Belgian barn.

In their defence, it must be remembered they only needed 10 pints of lager rather than a lifetime diet of The Victor, The Rover and the Daily Telegraph to do so. Although there's something faintly ridiculous about lots of people feeling obliged to buy silly truckers' hats surmounted by the US 'forefinger extended' gesture.

The week before this 'Beer Fest' trip, Skills of Nottingham had sent its best Jonckheere Deauville/Volvo B10M on the trip. It returned with an inoperative toilet which had been jammed with beer bottles.

To avoid another costly repair bill, the company sent one of its DAF/Plaxton 3200 automatics on the job. I was a waged part-time co-driver with Roger Severn who had been unfortunate enough to have suffered the last trip.

Trouble started immediately. Picking up from the feeders at Nottingham's Victoria Centre, our clients, who had already started their festivities before first boarding, wanted to know where the toilets were. 'Oh, then you'll have to stop on demand.' And indeed we did so. On one occasion I had to leave the E40 Euroroute in Belgium for a roadside toilet stop. Verdict - excellent manoeuvrability when reversing into driveways.

In other words, given the type of work, the 1983 DAF sans toilette was more than equal to the task. Furthermore, its DAF running gear meant any continental breakdown could be easily handled.

However, it must be said the coach is not the nippiest thing on the European autoroutes - and in Britain achieves a maximum speed of 65 mph. Its top speed limiter is absurdly set at 75 mph. Long



Skills' DAF/Plaxton: equal to the task of taking beer-lovers to Diksmuide.

gradients are also a pain. On the return up the M1 road speeds sometimes dropped to 15 mph.

The sunken aisles were very difficult to swill out.

But we were both happy to drive the machine on a round trip of a 1,000 miles total, with performance for the most part being quite adequate. And given it was an automatic, a return of 12.77 mpg was more

than should be normally expected - but this figure may be a reflection on its lack of pulling power on long gradients.

Hotels in the area around Diksmuide are differentially priced upwards at beer festival time, so at the planning stage Skills made the decision to base its overnight stop at the pleasant Alfa Louise in Brussels. But together with an afternoon tour of Brussels, the night trip to Diksmuide added considerably to the mileage - and as a consequence our time on the road.

Fortunately for me, my more experienced colleague chose the night driving while I drove the DAF on the city tour under his direction. I say fortunately - for trouble involving a few members of our party and some extremely large locals was narrowly prevented by the Belgian police. And before the journey home I confirmed my long-held suspicions of the sunken aisle on Plaxton bodies. They are difficult to swill out - especially when pavement pizzas are involved in an area 500 mm wide by 100 mm deep.

Familiarity with Plaxton 3200 bodywork makes any exterior description a waste of time. But the Skills vehicle was to Barton's specification which included an express-width (885 mm) passenger door. Power-operated, it opens in two-pieces internally either side of the entrance steps. Other features included parallelogram wipers,



Brussels' Atomium is the backdrop for the automatic DAF/Plaxton which returned 12.77 mpg over the 1,000 mile trip.

Lucas headlights, Hella foglights and smart stainless steel trim with prominent DAF badging.

Comfort

Passenger access is quite good, but the only two elderly passengers on the trip found the ground to first step height of 470 mm quite steep. They claimed they had 'bad legs' - a condition no doubt compounded by the very nature of the trip. However, the three following steps, which varied between 210 mm and 250 mm, were fairly even and shallow.

DAF was to dual-purpose specification, and the driver's area was fitted with a Set-Right ticket machine mounting for bus use. Good forward passenger circulation made the coach ideal for both bus and coach use, although there was no courtesy screen. Coach security was provided with the usual catch on the passenger door and access/egress through the lockable rear offside emergency door.

Use of laminates on interior walls and roofs were more common in the early 1980s - and very sensible too. Nearly eight years of operation has left the interior trim in good condition. With wipe-clean laminates, walls had a dark teak effect while the roof featured a white laminate with a subtle floral pattern. The floor was covered with red lino to the seating area and a non-slip surface to the sunken aisle and step areas.

Seating featured 53 fixed Plaxton Remax semi-recliners in a standard layout covered in a floral moquette with a Burgundy hue. Barton's original moquette meant Skills' general manager Terry Slater planned to re-cover them with the company's corporate colour. But the seat covering was still in good condition, indicating a high wool content with the moquette probably spun on Holdsworth's looms.

Parcel racks were of the older type, not disguised conduits for the individual airblowers and reading lights, and were quite adequate for hand baggage. Main saloon lighting was provided by three fluorescents set across the roof centre panel. Heating was adequate with ventilation supported by three Overton lift-up roof ventilators.

But sound quality was intermittent from the Radiomobile radio/cassette/PA - a fact that did not assist an 'adult' impromptu cabaret performed on the wander mike by three members of the party. However the performance, which had the surrealist feel of Vic Reeves 'Big Night Out' (on Channel 4 if you've never seen it), covered the whole coach through six pairs of stereo speakers set into the roof. But the 'turn' was lengthy - they wouldn't let it lie.

Performance

Seated in the fully-adjustable Chapman rigid plinth seat, driver comfort was reasonable. Instruments and switches were generally well laid out, but the steering wheel interfered with opening and closing the two-man Lucas Kienzle tachograph.

Brake and accelerator pedals were large



Destination Diksmuide: the British abroad.

and distinct, and complete with an angled footrest in the normal clutch pedal position. Without going into a detailed description of all fascia functions, it is a good idea to note the ignition has to be pushed in as well as turned - otherwise the vehicle will not start.

Coach was flexible enough for local and overseas work.

Visibility from the driving position was good, both forwards through the vertically split curved laminated windscreen and rearwards. Good views were to be had all round, with the exterior mirrors sensibly positioned above eye-level and a good view in the interior mirror. Another aid to turning at junctions was the angled Plaxton nearside window - which no other builder has done quite as well.

With lots of night driving and dismal daylight conditions, sun protection with the driver's roller blind was not used. But it was well positioned and appeared operable from a seated driving position with a draw cord at the offside. The wipers,

however, had two speeds - slow and very slow.

Not much roll was apparent, except when cornering, although the ZF power steering was light, firm and responsive. Longitudinal pitch was only discernable when the road surface was exceptionally uneven.

Verdict

On the flat the DAF achieves 60 mph in less than a minute, but progress to its 65 mph maximum is slow. Skills' traffic manager David Joynes said: 'Achieving 65 mph in any circumstances is a miracle.' So there you are.

With around 1,000 miles covered on the round trip, fuel consumption worked out at an incredible 12.77 mpg. I felt that this was very largely caused by constraints on high-speed performance over 60 mph. But it does suggest what operators might achieve with pre-set limiter fitment on jobs where time is not the essence.

Passenger criticisms regarding the absence of a toilet were perhaps inevitable, given the international dimension of their major hobby. But I feel Skills was quite justified in allocating an older, less upmarket vehicle for such work and custom. Additionally, both myself and Skills' regular driver Roger felt happy with the vehicle for most of the time.

Operators might be expected to shell out approximately £33,000 for such a late 1983-registered machine. And my feeling is it would be a good investment, although an automatic transmission might cause some concern regarding replacement costs.

Here is a machine not only flexible enough for local bus and contract work, but of sufficient quality and comfort to cope with less upmarket private hire and the in-house short breaks programme, whether in the UK or to near European destinations.

SPECIFICATION: 1983 DAF MB 230 DKFL/Plaxton 3200

Dimensions:

Length	11,955 mm
Width	2,500 mm
Height	3,200 mm
Wheelbase	6,000 mm
Rear overhang	3,740 mm
Front overhang	2,590 mm
Unladen weight	10,412 kg
GVW	16,270 kg

Engine DAF DKFL horizontal six-cylinder in-line 11.6 ltr turbocharged four-stroke direct-injection diesel

Max output	260 bhp @ 2,000 rpm
Max torque	794 lbf ft @ 1,300 rpm

Gearbox ZF 5HP 500 fully automatic
Steering ZF hydraulic power-assisted with 23.6:1 ratio
Brakes Drums all round, ZF integral retarder with foot control and transmission cooling

Suspension

Full air with double-acting shock-absorbers
Rear axle DAF 1346 single reduction, ratio 4.1:1
Wheels and tyres 295/80R, 22.5
Fuel tank 300-litre
Electrical 24V
Alternator 95 amp

PERFORMANCE

0-30 mph	14 seconds
0-40 mph	20 seconds
0-50 mph	34 seconds
0-60 mph	50 seconds

Fuel economy: Nottingham to Brussels, inclusive tours, and return

Distance	Used	MPG
1,000 miles (1,609 km)	78.31 gallons (356 litres)	12.77

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E reg FORD TRANSIT 12 SEAT L Model Minibus, cloth seats, side loading door & radio, beautiful condition throughout, super low deposit lease for £44 per week. Excellent value£5,995
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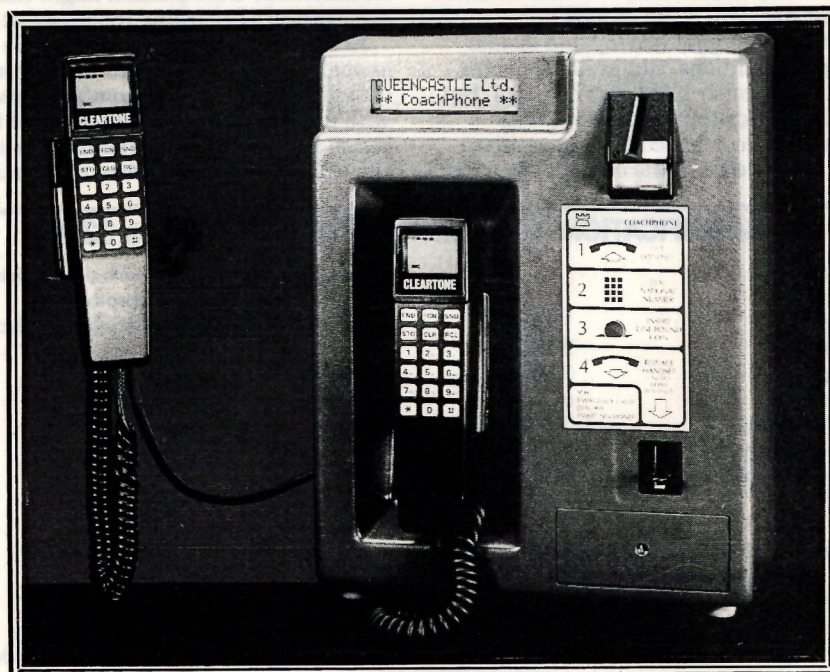
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ATKINS OPERATES IN SUCH SPLENDID ISOLATION

Rod Davey looks at a small operator with a strong sense of survival.

A LONG the coasts of Britain, many small operators exist side-by-side with the mainstream businesses of the seaside towns - and have to cope with an ever shrinking summer season largely isolated from the majority of mainland operation. One such operator is a two-coach concern in Skegness...Atkins Coach Tours.

But how do such operators survive the winter months? This was summed up by ex-schoolteacher Jacky Radford, who jointly directs this small limited liability company with her mother, a woman who has been in the business for more than 44 years and covers in the office when Jacky is out.

'Our annual turnover for 1989/90 was between £50,000-£60,000 for a maximum total mileage of 50,000 miles,' said Jacky. 'It's a family living. It's all it's ever been and all it's going to be.' But she added: 'The business has provided a living for three generations now.'

Although Atkins is not in the big league, the same business criteria applies to it as to any other firm. So margins from an extremely short summer season have to be spread throughout the whole year.

'And it's getting shorter,' said Jacky, 'As people visit Skegness for shorter periods.' She said many visitors now confined their stayovers to long weekends, mid-week breaks and day trips.

The 'season' now only lasts from the end of May to the end of August - with the busiest months being August and July. During this period the main work is special shoppers' excursions.

Although Jacky used to cost these trips at 90p/mile, given a minimum loading of 30 passengers, she now costs at £1/mile to take account of diesel price increases due to the Gulf conflict. On average, seats are priced at £3.25 for adults and £3 for children and retired people - and Jacky says the break-even point is achieved at 25 passengers at the OAP price, in other words £75.

Geared to market days, trips usually visit either Grimsby or Cleethorpes on Tuesdays, Boston on Wednesdays and go to Lincoln on Fridays.

Shoppers' trips are backed with half-



A winning team: managing director Jacky Radford and drivers Peter Ireland (left) and Mick Chapman.

day excursions to Mablethorpe and themed trips such as 'Windmills and Watermills', an 'Aviation Tour' to Battle of Britain Flight at RAF Coningsby - and 'Tennyson Country'.

The latter trip, centred around the life and work of England's best known poet, has been the source of inspiration for a young woman studying English Literature at university.

The business has provided a living for three generations.

Afterwards she burst into Atkins' office in Tower Esplanade and proclaimed: 'I have really learned something today. Thank you for a marvellous trip.' Such a positive response had been achieved with a commentary from Atkins' full-time driver/courier Peter Ireland, although he steadfastly said he drew the line at reciting poetry.

Gaps in her education had been filled with a visit to Harrington Hall where the poet recited 'Come into the garden Maude'; Woodman's Cottage where

Tennyson used to write; Somersby Church where the poet's father used to preach and where the young Tennyson was baptised; the castellated house where the lad played with his toy soldiers; and Stockwith Mill - the scene of recitations of the 'Miller's Daughter', now a coffee stop with a Tennyson-themed souvenir shop.

Throughout the season, the company runs traditional evening 'Mystery Tours' around the Lincolnshire coast and countryside - with at least three variations a week interworked with the shoppers' excursions.

For example, Atkins' 1983 Plaxton Paramount 3200/Bedford YNT with 53 fixed seats, bought from Brumptions of Dunham Bridge, will be sent out with Peter on a Lincolnshire County Council tendered schools contract service - along with a half-day excursion and evening tour.

The company's other coach, a 53-seater Plaxton Supreme/Ford bought new in 1978, is driven at the moment by seasonal driver and self-employed roofing contractor Mick Chapman on the full day shoppers' excursion and evening tour.

This vehicle features a Plaxton Paramount MkII front - fitted by Kirkby in 1989 following a head-on collision with a car overtaking in the opposite direction.

Both vehicles are also interworked with available private hire throughout the week - as well as seaside excursions to Scarborough, Bridlington, Cromer, Sheringham, Great Yarmouth, Hunstanton and Sandringham according to demand. But Jacky said such trips were on the wane: 'Except trips to Cromer and the Sea Life Centre in Hunstanton.'

But throughout the season, indeed for 52 weeks a year, the company runs a shoppers' express service to Sheffield - and has been doing so for more than 40 years. With day returns priced at £5.50 and single fares £5, Sheffield people happily use the service to reach their static caravans in Skegness.

Around this short core summer season is what Jacky describes as the 'extended season', which takes in spring and autumn. Work at these times in the year mainly serves people who have

◀ bought homes in the area for their retirement, and have both the 'time and the money' for Atkins' own holidays and tours. According to Jacky: 'Where possible we provide door-to-door pick-ups around the East Lindsey/Skegness area.'

Every year the company serves this market with a seven-night holiday based at Shanklin on the Isle of Wight. It includes two full-day tours and one half-day - and is priced at £171 if en-suite facilities are requested.

In addition, Atkins run a five day holiday for Blackpool Illuminations every October as well as a different eight day tour. This year it is Bournemouth and Folkestone, but last year the IoW proved so popular the company ran two tours there. Next year, the tour destination is Weymouth.

Sadly, Jacky added: 'It's a sign of the times that we are only running three extended tours next year - due to a combination of the Poll Tax, high interest rates and high mortgage repayments. This industry is for people's pleasure - and depends on what's left after a household's normal expenses. If these are increasing it badly affects the demand for our services.'

But additionally, Atkins runs at least three eight-day private hires each year, mostly British tours - but the odd continental trip is not entirely unknown. However, Jacky spoke again of the shrinking market: 'This has been a bad year. Although our eight-day tours went down well, none of our weekend and mid-week minibreaks are running.'

Both Jacky and Peter felt this was because the longer breaks were perceived to be better value. For next year, the programme will reflect this and only two minibreaks are planned 'to test the market'. Despite this, Jacky maintains the coaches have not been idle as the company has been able to fit in more private hire and excursion work.

'Although we plan about three months in advance the excursion market fluctuates, so we only know later what to put on.' But Jacky added: 'But by this time we always know where the land lies and what will definitely go.' For example, the company is able to run trips to Grimsby, Peterborough, Lincoln, Nottingham and York all through the season. It appears Atkins' clientele always go for the shopping.

The Poll Tax, high interest rates and mortgage repayments have hit extended tours.

Off-season, the only months of activity are October, November and December - and business takes a nose-dive in January, February and March. Main work up to Christmas is yet more shopping excursions - and the company's Saturday express services to Sheffield will drop down and pick-up at the new Meadowhall Centre until further notice.

'Flexibility is the name of the game,' said Jacky. 'Watch the market and listen to what people want.' A good example is the Weymouth tour in the main summer season, which is fitted in with shorter tours using the other vehicle.

In October, destinations are confined to York, Grimsby and Meadowhall. But, the Christmas shopping season really expands in November with Lincoln, Doncaster, Peterborough, Birmingham, Nottingham, King's Lynn and Caithness Glass, 'The Ridings' in Wakefield and Leicester added to the list. Late shopping carries on in December, along with visits to Lincoln's Christmas Market and Turner's Carol Concert held in Northampton.

Despite January and February being confined to schools contracts, the Saturday express service and whatever

private hire is booked, Jacky says cashflow is assured with holiday bookings at this time. Excursions start their slow take-off in March.

With this seaside isolation, it is perhaps fortunate competition is not exactly intense for this shrinking market. Other local operators Sam's of Skegness competes in the private hire market - but Atkins' own tours and excursions market is largely unchallenged. Lincolnshire Road Car concentrates its efforts into local bus work these days.

'Our biggest strong point is that we've been in Skegness now for 85 years,' said Jacky. Brand loyalty means marketing is largely by word of mouth - and, very important in the summer months, potential customers passing the office's window display.

The company also has agents in Skegness, Spilsby and Horncastle, uses ads in the local press and leaflets large hotels such as The Savoy and the County Hotel. This year Atkins promoted itself in the Hoteliers' Association 'Bedroom Browser' and Handbook.

The company was founded in 1905 by Annie Atkins, when the company's undercover garage in Roseberry Avenue, which is still in use today, was started.



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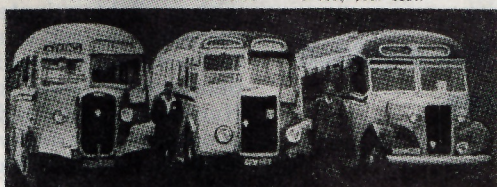
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Mablethorpe—3/9 return. 2.15 and 6.30 p.m.
Cleethorpes—Tuesday and Friday. 6/6 return (7/- during August). Stay five hours (giving plenty of time for visit to Grimsby).

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The team and its fleet: outside the Tower Esplanade office.

But horse-drawn PSVs were run since the 1870s by Atkins Omnibus Co prior to the rail link to Skegness - carrying passengers into the town from the rail head in Wainfleet.

Annie sold what was then a seven-vehicle business in 1946 to Jack Fowler, Jacky's grandfather, who kept the Atkins name. Trade peaked in the late 50s and early 60s - but by the end of the 60s the company was down to two vehicles. 'Early post-War affluence led to an increase in seaside holidays - then increasing living standards led to the popularity of air-package holidays,' said Jacky.

The gradual fall in demand can be well charted by Jacky, for her father Alan took over in 1961 when her grandfather died and she took over the business when Alan died in 1988.

Fired with enthusiasm, Jacky tried expanding the fleet to three vehicles with an additional school contract. But it did not pay, so in December last year Jacky sold an AEC 760/Plaxton Elite, with a Paramount Mk IV front end, to David Bowie, of Huddersfield.

Atkins carried out its own maintenance between 1946 and the late 60s, then used a contract mechanic. But it has had a maintenance contract, with Seacroft Garage in Roseberry Avenue since the early 70s. Its Tower Esplanade office is a National Express agent, RAC agent - and also sells Butlins day tickets to Funcoast World in Ingoldmells.

Plans for the future are restricted to hanging on in there. 'We have no plans for expansion, but intend to stay small and beautiful,' said Jacky. As she manually takes care of the VAT and wages she admits a two-vehicle fleet is the optimal size she can look after efficiently.

But apart from Peter Ireland, who has driven for her for four years, it would appear there are no plans next year to take on a seasonal driver. Jacky is taking PSV driving lessons from

Peter and is taking her test next year to go out on the road. 'She's very good,' said Peter. A good job too, as the Grimsby test centre is very strict.

Atkins' survival is down to the personal touch.

Peter, who previously worked for Hogg's of Boston (now Boylaine Travel) and Freemans Coaches based at Bloxwich in the West Midlands, says he couldn't wish to work for a better boss.

Dressed in a smart red blazer, he said: 'Image is important and the vehicle might not be new but they are in pristine condition.' Both have been re-carpetted, and the Ford has been retrimmed with new moquette at M&H in Leeds.

Atkins' survival is put down to the

'personal touch'. Jacky said: 'People know they're dealing with the proprietor. We don't get many complaints, but we do get lots of praise. I get a great deal of satisfaction seeing the fruits of my own labour. It makes it worthwhile when customers say thank you very much for a lovely tour.'

And as far as its tricky market position is concerned, the company has adapted to suit it. 'We're isolated and starved of good roads,' said Jacky. 'The population is thin on the ground so we have to be prepared to have a considerable pick up route.'

It can take three and a half hours to pick-up for an eight-day tour. But the company picks up the luggage on Friday night for its Saturday departures, picking the passengers up at home on the following day. Such flexibility has seen Atkins survive the past 85 years.



The company's Ford with Plaxton Supreme bodywork: has a Plaxton Paramount MKII front due to a 1989 accident.



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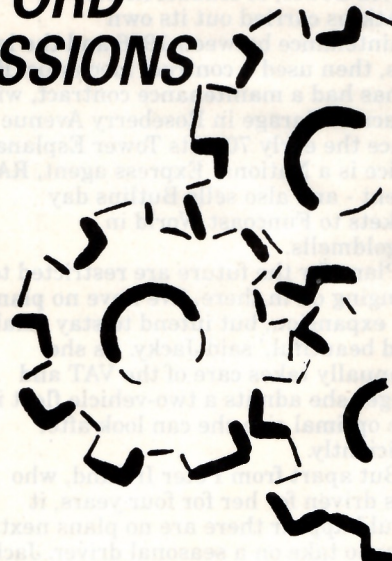
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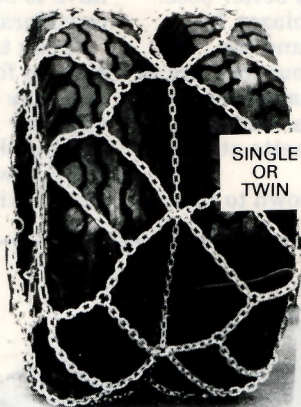
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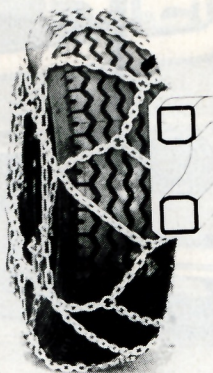
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LEGAL NEWS

■ NEW regulations covering PSV driving licences will not now come into effect until April 1, 1991, when a single licence will be issued by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency in Swansea.

Proposals to implement these changes on January 1, 1991 (Coachmart 582, April 5, 1990) were deferred by three months to give the industry time to adjust. Buses and coaches with more than 17 seats (including driver) will be classified as Passenger Carrying Vehicles and existing class one, two and three PSV licences will be combined.



PSV licences: single licence due in April 1991.

Existing PSV drivers need take no action. They will be phased into the harmonised system as existing licences expire. Drivers will get reminders from the DVLA - if address records are correct. Area traffic offices will not be involved because all driving entitlement will be shown on one DVLA EC style document. One consequence is that no PSV driver's badges will be issued.

Category D in the new system covers PCV drivers - all buses and coaches regardless of use. Existing drivers of large buses using ordinary car licences have up to March 31, 1992, to claim grandfather rights. DVLA will provide forms from the middle of 1991 so that fitters, cleaners and others can claim PCV entitlement. They must have driven this type of vehicle for at least three years - any claims being certified by an employer or another responsible person acceptable to DVLA.

The type of vehicle used for PCV test is still being looked at. An announcement is expected in the very near future, but it is expected that test vehicles will have to be over nine metres in length, capable of 50 mph and seat more than 17 - no requirement for double deckers.

Hills has its licence cut



SOUTH Wales operator Hills (Tredegar) Ltd has had its licence

authorisation cut from 75 vehicles to the 59 it currently operates following a spate of maintenance problems.

A Cardiff disciplinary hearing heard the company had suffered problems following the death of owner Mr Harry Hill.

Traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh told the company it should regard the proceedings as a very severe warning about its future conduct.

For Hills, Mr Roger Cradick said it was a very old established and responsible company which had been operating public service vehicles since 1919.

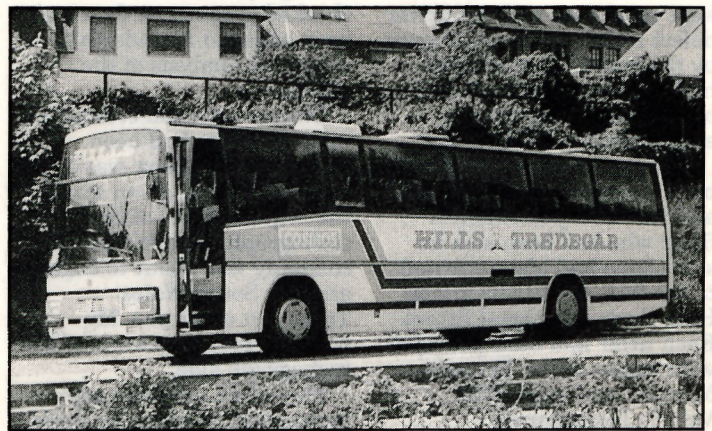
The 39 prohibition notices showed a gradually deteriorating state of affairs since Harry Hill's death.

It was probably the largest private operator in South Wales and was currently authorised to operate 75 vehicles. This was the first occasion Hills had ever been before a traffic commissioner over matters of this nature and it was a very sad occasion.

Mr Cradick said problems arose following the illness of the late Mr Harry Hill. Ownership of the company passed to his widow, Mrs Elizabeth Hill, who was now the chairman, managing director and major shareholder.

The operational side had largely been left to the general manager who had been in charge since Mr Harry Hill's death. There had unfortunately been a loss of morale in the company because of uncertainty about what was going to happen following Mr Hill's death.

The 39 prohibition notices, including variations, imposed on the company's vehicles



Hills (Tredegar): first time before a traffic commissioner over maintenance matters.

showed a gradually deteriorating state of affairs, there having been three in 1988 and 11 in 1989. It was conceded that the company's management had not been what it should have been.

The prohibitions had been limited to 20 vehicles, only one third of the fleet, said Mr Cradick. They were the older vehicles used on local services and only 16 of them remained in the fleet. All 16 had been through the MoT test in recent weeks and every one of the company's vehicles was now fit for the road.

It was recognised the company's preventative maintenance system had fallen down. The vehicle examiner's report had indicated that a pretty sorry state of affairs had existed in July and appropriate steps had been taken to put matters right.

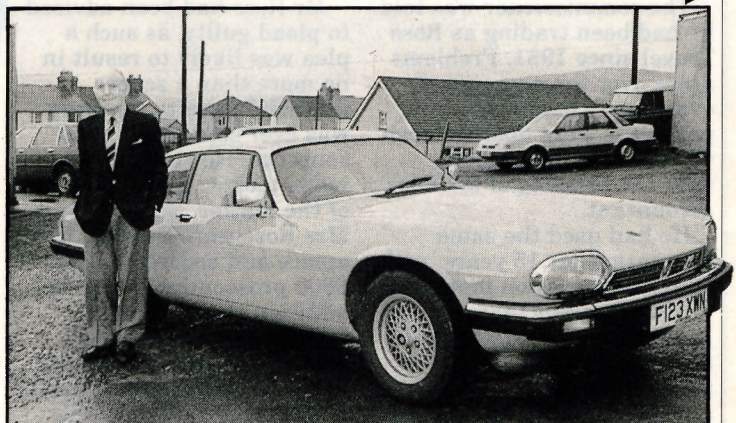
The employment of the company's general manager had been terminated, it being

felt that his style of management was not conducive to good staff relations.

It was felt the company would do better under new direction and it had acquired

Commissioner said the fact there had been no major incident involving death or injury may have been due to luck.

the services of Mr Roger Thornton, the current commercial manager of South Wales Transport, as general and transport manager. In the hiatus period before Mr Thornton joined the company, Mr Clifford Pierce would act as transport manager as a stop gap.



Harry Hill: his death caused a lack of morale within the company.

Weekly report on law and the coach operator By Michael Jewell

◀ The company would ensure there was a rigid four weekly inspection period, controlled by a flow chart, said Mr Cradick. In the past, the flow chart had not been kept up to date and the driver defect report system had gone by the board. That system had been brought back into being and its importance emphasised to all drivers.

The maintenance staff had been increased by two fitters and two YTS personnel. A fitter who had been sick for some time had also returned to the fold, effectively giving Hills three additional fitters. Each fitter had been provided with copies of the 'Tester's Manual' and other DTp Vehicle Inspectorate publications.

More than £300,000 had been spent on tyres and spares and the wage bill for the maintenance staff came to £140,000 per annum. There was no question of the

company evading its responsibilities for financial reasons.

Mr Cradick said steps had been taken to ensure that tachograph charts were checked properly. A firm had been engaged to undertake computer analysis of the charts.

Drivers who had committed infringements had been spoken to and there was to be a series of talks given about the requirements of the tachograph regulations. The company was about to engage another South Wales Transport employee, Mr Richard Young, to oversee the tachograph side.

There had not been any tachograph offences for some time, apart from two in 1988 and 1989, and notices were to be put in the cabs of the vehicles to remind drivers of the requirements.

In reply to Mr Mervyn Pugh, Mrs Hill agreed to have

all the company's buses MoT tested before the licence expired at the end of next April.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said it was a tragedy he had to deal with a firm whose name was synonymous with South Wales, and it was with great sadness he found Hills before him. He fully understood and accepted that when death struck no-one knew the ultimate repercussions. He could fully understand the uncertainty that arose when a man, who was a dominant leader of both his firm and the industry, suddenly went.

He felt it was a matter of some significance that, numerous though the defects had been, there had not been a major incident involving death and injury to the public.

However, that was possibly due to luck, as many of the defects found had constituted a danger to the public.

As Hills' licence was due to expire next April, he felt it would be unfair and unjust to cut the duration.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said it was perhaps interesting to note that the last immediate prohibition notice had been in August. That meant there had been a clear tightening up since then. He felt he had to take into consideration the future as well as the past.

After Mrs Hill had said the company would have been looking to put additional vehicles on the road in the Spring, Mr Mervyn Pugh said he would be prepared to increase the authorisation if all went well between now and March.

Saying that the company's renewal application would be dealt with at a public inquiry, Mr Mervyn Pugh commented that if the day ever came when people doubted safety when they got on a bus, it would be the day to pack up.

Jailed man wins his PSV fight



WEST Yorkshire operator Mr Peter Ross - who was jailed for tax evasion - has won his fight to retain his PSV operator's licence.

A disciplinary hearing before North Eastern traffic commissioner Mr Frederick Whalley, heard that Mr Ross - trading as Ross Travel, of Featherstone - holds a licence authorising the operation of 10 vehicles.

For Mr Ross, it was conceded that he had paid drivers cash in hand and had been convicted of tax evasion at Leeds Crown Court in June.

The commissioner was told he had been trading as Ross Travel since 1981. Problems arose over the payment of overtime to employees and payments were made in cash without any deductions, with the blessing of Mr Ross' accountant.

He had used the same accountant for 15 years, and he left all taxation matters to him. In 1985/1986 the Inland Revenue visited the accountant's office and removed a number of files, one of which related to Ross Travel.

When Mr Ross was

approached by the Inland Revenue, he took legal advice and he was advised to say nothing. The accountant had been submitting tax returns without Mr Ross' approval. The accountant was sentenced to six months imprisonment, Mr Ross to three months, and Mrs Ross to three months, suspended for two years.

Prison sentence had a traumatic effect upon the family who depended upon the business.

Mr Ross had been advised to plead guilty, as such a plea was likely to result in no more than a severe financial penalty. Nothing was ever said about a jail sentence. However, the judge took a very dim view of the matter. Both Mr and Mrs Ross were fined £2,000 apiece and ordered to pay £600 prosecution costs. In addition there was an outstanding debt to the Inland Revenue of £12,000.

The prison sentence had a traumatic effect upon the family, all of whom depended upon the business.



Peter Ross: jailed for three months for tax evasion.

Mrs Ross had carried on the business while her husband was in prison. Some of the blame could be said to be professional blame, as the accountant had known what was going on.

Mr Ross said he had

placed a great deal of trust in his accountant, who he had used from the beginning. He had signed an odd tax return, but the accountant had been signing them himself. The offences were discovered in 1985/1986 and it had taken until 1990 to get to court. That had put a great deal of strain on the family.

Peter Ross said he had to pay drivers cash in hand because other operators did.

The fines of £4,000 imposed on himself and his wife had been paid within two days. The legal costs had come to £5,000 and his new accountant had so far charged him £4,000. He was in touch with the Inland Revenue and so far £5,000 had been paid.

There were no problems over paying the remainder but the end figure had not yet been determined. He paid cash in hand to encourage drivers to work.

Mr Whalley said Mr Ross could not blame his accountant. He knew that

Weekly report on law and the coach operator By Michael Jewell

wages were subject to taxation, and he had made the decision to disregard the law in that respect.

In reply to Mr Whalley, Mr Ross said the Inland Revenue had investigated a five year period. The conviction had not affected his business. No contracts had been lost and there had not been a downturn.

Most of the drivers who were paid in cash were full-time drivers. About £50 to £60 a week was paid in cash. If he had not paid them cash in hand, the drivers would not have worked overtime as other operators were paying drivers cash in hand. He had not notified the traffic area of the conviction as he had not realised it was necessary.

Mr Whalley said he was greatly concerned to hear that it was common practice within the industry to pay cash in hand. An example had to be made. Neither he nor the Inland Revenue would tolerate back handers or payment in cash. Every

operator had to realise the implications of defrauding the Inland Revenue.

It could mean they lost their good repute, and he would then have no alternative but to revoke their licences.

For Mr Ross, it was said there were no other convictions recorded against him.

Mr Whalley said it was not his job to impose additional punishment. He had to decide whether Mr Ross had lost his good repute. There was in fact no doubt that he had. The question was, had he redeemed his repute?

Fundamentally, Mr Ross was an upright person in the view of his bankers and business associates. He had been misled by the practice adopted by his competitors.

Consequently, said Mr Whalley he considered that Mr Ross had redeemed his repute sufficiently for licensing purposes. However, he warned that Mr Ross would have to be 'whiter than white' in the future, as he would be closely watched.

Bolton makes third appearance before traffic commissioner



THE five vehicle PSV operator's licence held by Farnham-based Mr R W Bolton - trading as R W Bolton Minicoaches - has been revoked by the Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier Michael Turner who also turned down Mr Bolton's application for renewal.

Mr Bolton, of 13 Shady Nook, Farnham, had been called before the commissioner for the third time within two years because of his maintenance record.

In December 1988, the commissioner decided not to take any disciplinary action, but was only prepared to renew Mr Bolton's licence for a two year period, and in respect of six vehicles and not the nine applied for.

A second public inquiry at the end of 1989 led to the

authorisation on the licence being cut from six to five vehicles, and the duration reduced.

The commissioner refused to grant a stay pending any appeal to the Transport Tribunal.

Operator has licence revoked



NORTH Western traffic commissioner Mr Martin Albu has revoked the

PSV operator's licence held by David and Maira Wyn Price, trading as Cabs Padarn, of Llanberis, Gwynedd.

However, he has directed that his decision should not take effect pending the determination of an appeal by the Prices to the Transport Tribunal.

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Leyland National service buses,
73/74/75, with good MoTs

COACHES

1983 LEYLAND TIGER 245
PLAXTON 3500, 49 reclining seats
to National Express spec, MoT
June 1991£30,000

1982 LEYLAND LEOPARD 680,
semi auto Plaxton, 50 reclining
seats, MoT May 1991£19,500

1982 LEYLAND SWIFT,
32 seats, Reeve Burgess body

1979 VOLVO B58 DUPE
DOMINANT, 53 seats, MoT July
1991£15,000

1975 BEDFORD with Plaxton Elite
body, 500 engine, 53 seats.



DOUBLE DECKERS FROM £2,000

LEYLAND AN 68 PARK ROYAL, 74 seats,
BRISTOL VRT, Leyland engines, ECW, 74 seats,
1975-79.

MINI BUSES

1985 IVECO 60/10 coach interior,
19 high back seats.

1986-7 FREIGHT ROVER SHERPA
CARLYLE, 16 and 20 seats, service
spec choice.

SERVICE BUSES

Large selection of Leyland Nationals,
1973-74-75.

From £4,000

Also Gardner Engine
Leyland Nationals 10 & 11 metres

ONE ONLY
73 Bristol RE, 53 seats.

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DESCRIPTIONS ACT. WE QUOTE THE YEAR
OF THE REGISTRATION NOT THE YEAR OF
MANUFACTURE.

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M6 exit Junction 18, A54 2 miles from motorway

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FAX NO: (0606) 845602

New deals, discounts, attractions, tips...New deals, discounts, attractions, tips...

Somme trips are on offer

SHORT breaks in and around the Somme are now on offer to coach operators.

Escapade - a group of hoteliers - welcomes visitors for just 135 francs a night for a double room in a two or three star hotel (£1 = approximately 9.5 francs).

The towns of Amiens, Abbeville, Cambrai and Peronne are ideal centres from which to visit such attractions as the battlefields and memorials of World War One, the Picardy coast, the valley of the River Somme plus Paris and the Asterix amusement park.

The trips can be arranged through *Loisirs Accueil* at 21, rue Ernest Cauvin, 80 8000 Amiens. Tel: 010 33 22 92 26 39.

London dirty? it's rubbish

A SURVEY among overseas visitors to London reveals the capital no longer has a big litter problem.

The London Tourist Board survey says 28 percent of visitors to London in 1990 thought litter was a big problem compared to 50 percent in 1989.

LTB head of development Robert Chenery said: 'Action taken by London Transport and many London boroughs - most notably Westminster - to clean up streets and public transport has now paid off. We are confident that London's environment will continue to improve.'

Enjoy the magic of Mozart

NEXT year is Mozart Bicentenary Year and to commemorate the anniversary Norman Allen Group Travel Ltd is organising trips to Austria.

Suggested tours start from £272 per person for a 10 day tour (based on a minimum of 30 paying persons) and include hotel accommodation and return ferry (dinner, bed and breakfast throughout except for three nights in Vienna).

Details of this tour and others planned for 1991 can be obtained from the company at 13 Commercial Street, Hereford HR1 2DB. Tel: 0432 277666. Fax: 0432 352041. Freephone 0800 262 273.

Holiday guide is better than ever

ENGLAND Holidays '91 - the official guide to holidays at home - is now even better and brighter than ever.

Published by the English Tourist Board, the 65 page brochure is packed with hundreds of tempting holidays at affordable prices.

The brochure is designed to make choice simple and is split into four sections - seaside, countryside, out and about and activity holidays.

It includes package holidays by coach and indexes to holiday regions, resorts and holiday companies.

For more details, contact Jane Tchan, head of marketing communications, English Tourist Board, Thames Tower, Black's Road, Hammersmith, London W6 9EL. Tel: 081 846 9000 extension 3350.



Heather Pickering: we need to have a say on European issues.

Heather's in charge

HEATHER Pickering has been appointed full-time executive director of the European Tour Operators Association (ETOA).

Miss Pickering - who has more than 20 years experience in the tourism industry - says any organisation expecting to make a mark in Europe has to be high profile and effective and urges travel operators and suppliers to join the association.

She said: 'We can't just let the EEC legislate around us and invent regulations that will have a profound effect on the industry for years to come.'

'I'm very much looking forward to making ETOA the organisation that Brussels automatically turns to when formulating legislation. ETOA members have formidable buying power and it is right that they have a say over what happens to the industry in a single market Europe.'

You can contact ETOA at 132 Ritherdon Road, London SW17 8QQ. Tel: 081 675 1665. Fax: 071 407 5911.

Leicester has something for everyone

LEICESTER has given itself a brand new tourism image which highlights the city as 'The Birthplace of Tourism.'

The multi-cultural city hosts a variety of festivals and carnivals throughout the year, has a heritage of knitwear manufacture and was the business base of Thomas Cook.

Cook ran his first package tour in 1841 from Leicester to Loughborough and the city will mark the 150th anniversary of the pioneering trip next year.

Leicester is also offering a series of weekend breaks which will take you around the globe and experience many different cultures without even leaving the city.

Themes include The Thomas Cook Experience, A Fashionable Weekend, Calypso and Carnival and Diwali Nights & Lights.

For more information, contact Andy Sykes, project director, Leicester Tourism Development Ltd, on 0533 854535.

Travel show to move in 1992

WORLD Travel Market 1992 is to be held at Earls Court - moving from its Olympia home for the first time since its launch in 1980.

The announcement of the change of venue comes at the end of the record-breaking 1990 show which was supported by nearly 3,200 exhibitors.

Both Earls Court 1 and Earls Court 2 - with a total of 32,000 square metres of exhibition space - will be used for the 1992 exhibition which will take place from Tuesday, November 17 to Friday, November 20.

Tom Nutley, World Travel Market exhibition director, said: 'A change of venue will give us a potential 10,000 additional square metres of space. No other London venue would be large enough for World Travel Market now.'

COACHES WELCOME AT CHRISTMAS



MEALSTOPS

NORTH YORKSHIRE

GRANTS HOTEL, HARROGATE

For morning coffee and biscuits. 3-course party lunches. Yorkshire high teas.

Grants award-winning Hotel is situated in quiet road just along from the famous Valley Gardens and only 2 minutes from the main shopping area.

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Grants Hotel, Swan Road, Harrogate HG1 2SS

Telephone: 0423 560666 or Fax: 0423 502550

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EAST CROYDON

APOLLO HOTEL

East Croydon

Excellent Family Run Hotel

15 rooms, colour TV, tea/coffee making facilities, late arrivals and early breakfasts catered for. Good home cooking.

20 mins from London. Mini or midi coaches welcome. 2/3 days, Fri, Sat & Sun.

Open all year round.

For further details and information, telephone

Mrs Rhead 081 653 2830

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CANTERBURY

ANN'S HOUSE

Close to city centre with ample parking. Family run hotel.

19 selective bedrooms with 12 en suite. Late arrivals accepted. Early breakfast catered for. Close to ferry ports. Good home cooking.

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Lisa Dellaway. Tel. (0227) 768767

63 London Road

Canterbury CT2 8TZ

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HEREFORDSHIRE

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THE HEART OF

OAK INN

Edgar Street, Hereford

Beer and skittles nights

Coach parties welcomed

and catered for, with

sandwiches or basket

service.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

0432 276056

(15387/HO)

EASTBOURNE

AVONDALE

Private Hotel

Eastbourne

Dates available for 1991

April 27th - 11th May

June 1st - 8th June

June 29th - 27 July

Aug 10th - 24th Aug

Sept 14th - 21st Sept

Avoid disappointment, book early

TELEPHONE 0323 23510

SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL

OUR CUSTOMERS

(15308/HO)



"WHY WAIT TILL CHRISTMAS?"

JOIN OUR TINSEL AND TURKEY 4 DAY CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Monday-Friday
November-December

Monday - Getting to know you

Tuesday - Christmas Eve

Wednesday - Christmas Day

Thursday - Boxing Day

Friday - Breakfast going home

DON'T DELAY - PHONE TODAY

SOUTH PARADE HOTEL SKEGNESS

A licensed, family run, seafront hotel, close to shops and main attractions, are now booking for 1991.

En suite rooms, lift, tea and coffee making facilities, entertainment and home cooked food with a choice of menu.

Enquiries to Babs and Terry Bolland

Merry Christmas and

A Happy New Year

Tel. (0754) 4113

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WONDERLAND

4 Day Special Theme Break

For good food, fun and

frolics Monday-Friday,

January-March

Spend 4 days being treated

like a king!

Phone now -

it's a cracking break!

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PENDOWER HOTEL

Falmouth, Cornwall

(3 crowns)

Excellent location near beach and town centre.

Can accommodate 52 guests. Mostly en suite rooms. Tea making facilities.

Superb English cooking.

Lounge and TV lounge. Bar and outdoor heated pool.

Available dates

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Also April for the Cornwall Spring

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Coach operators call us to discuss special rates.

22 rooms, 15 en suite

AVAILABLE FROM MARCH ONWARDS

One lingers with pleasure and leaves with regret.

WISH ALL OUR CUSTOMERS A

MERRY CHRISTMAS

(15332/HO)

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THE BELGRAVE HOTEL TENBY

Warm, friendly, comfortable, good food,

choice menu, nightly entertainment.

Bedrooms with private bathroom, tea,

coffee making facilities. Sky TV...

APRIL, MAY and OCTOBER

4/5 nights half board from £69.50

Easter Mon-Fri £69.50 ... Spring Bank Holidays Mon-Sat £94.50

Tel. Tenby (0834) 2377 ask for Malcolm Thomas

Late September 6 & 7 nights from £115.00

(15471/HO)



CORNWALL

CORBYN HOTEL PENTIRE AVENUE, NEWQUAY TR7 1PA

Family run licensed hotel, 200 yards from the beach. 18 rooms, 16 en suite, all with satellite TV and tea-makers. Centrally heated. Good home cooking. Entertainment, parking.

Early/late season. Coach driver free.

4 DAY NEW YEAR SPECIAL WITH ENTERTAINMENT

30 DECEMBER-2 JANUARY

(0637) 873263

SEASONAL GREETINGS

(14733/HO)

SURREY

HOTEL ANTOINETTE

26 Beaufort Road, Kingston, Surrey

Tel: 081-546 1044 Fax: 081-547 2595

Kingston's well established Family owned Hotel, offers comfortable accommodation at a realistic Tariff. All rooms are en suite, with colour TV, telephone & tea/coffee making facilities.

Three Licensed Restaurants.

Easy access to Central London by Road & Public Transport.

Close to Hampton Court, Kew Gardens & many famous Sporting Venues.

FREE COACH PARK

Seasons Greetings to all our customers

(15279/HO)

COACHES WELCOME AT CHRISTMAS



ISLE OF WIGHT

1991

MARCH MADNESS!

5 nights full board £53.75,
standard room, full board
including VAT.

(Minimum 40 people)

Some other dates also
available.

INTERESTED?

Tel. 0983 402266

for brochure and available dates.

**RAYLES HOTEL,
SANDOWN
Isle of Wight**

SEASONAL GREETINGS TO ALL OUR
CUSTOMERS (15174/HOI)

PERTSHIRE

Under New Management

DUNDARACH HOTEL, PILTOCHRY

30 bedrooms en suite, totally
refurbished, tea making facilities,
telephones, colour TVs, centrally heated
throughout, within walking distance of
the Festival Theatre and town centre.

(0796) 2862

THE BIRNAM HOTEL, DUNKELD

AA* RAC*****
30 bedrooms en suite (totally
refurbished 1987), tea making,
telephones, colour TV, centrally heated
throughout, lift to all floors, baronial
dining/ballroom for 150.

(03502) 462

*Coach lunches welcome at both
hotels*

*Our position makes us an ideal
centre for a week's stay in the
Perthshire Highlands.*

SMILE FAMILY HOTELS
where a warm welcome awaits you

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

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LIDO DE JESOLO (NEAR VENICE) 1991

HOTEL INTERNATIONAL - 2 Star Hotel - 66 rooms
(62 with private facilities, most with balconies)

50 yards from private beach.

**IDEAL LOCATION FOR COACH TOURS - Venice, Padova,
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EXCELLENT RATES - for twin rooms, half board.

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10% reduction for 3rd person sharing

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5% reduction for more than one booking on different dates.

Merry Christmas Buon Natale

CALL CORINNA NOW ON 0273 677777

(15436/HOI)

0733 898111

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To operate successfully in this demanding and competitive market you
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Please send a comprehensive CV including salary details or ring for an
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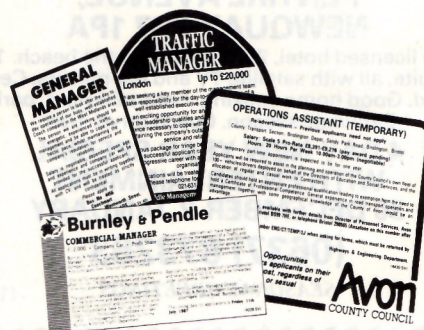
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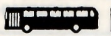
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Copy deadline: 1pm Tuesday for Thursday's issue. **Cancellation deadline:** 11am Tuesday.

BARGAIN BUSES



BARGAIN BUS

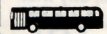
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16 seat Crystals luxury conversion, registered May 1989, 41,000 miles, high back seats, full soft trim, tested, substantial saving against new.

£12,000

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(15620/BB)



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Plaxton Mk4 front, 41 recliners, recent engine, re-floored gangway carpet, soft trim, air horns, stereo, PA.

£5,500

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760 Plaxton, MkIV front, 53 seats, power door, test to Nov '91.

£6,250 ono + VAT

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AEC 760 PLAXTON SUPREME, 53, V reg, white and blue, straight panels, good condition. 1 year MoT, good tyres and batteries. ready for Winter work. Service records. How good? Used on our UK Tours. **£9,950. Tel: HARRIS SUPER 0527 75353.**

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(15591/AEC)

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SPECIAL OFFER

One only AEC 760 Horizontals. LEYLAND 680 Horizontal engine. Both can be heard running

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(15439/AEC)

BEDFORD

1984 BEDFORD YNT DUPE LASER, 53 seater, PA, radio, side lockers, first class condition. Must be seen, MoT March '91, **£23,500 + VAT. Larratt Pepper & Sons Ltd. Tel. (0709) 892153.**

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1984 BEDFORD YNT PARAMOUNT

53 seater. Radio/PA/ Cassette. Limiter fitted, private plates, MoT to May 91.

£25,000 + VAT

Tel. Windsor 0753 860131

(15639/BE)

BEDFORD PLAXTON PJK, 1983, 29 seater, power door, radio cassette, PA, all white, MoT Oct '91, **£11,500 ono. Tel. Windmill Coaches, (0206) 210263 Colchester.**

(15295/RF)

1982 X REG BEDFORD YMT DOMINANT II

53 red moquette seats, power door, Bristol dome, MoT April 1991, radio.

£9,500 + VAT

Tel. 0734 713257 Berks

(15428/BE)

WRIGHTS CONTOUR, 1984, 53 reclining seats, limited, taxed & tested, good all round condition, realistically priced at **£18,250 + VAT. Tel. 0203 595160.**

(15594/BE)

1971 Bedford Duple, 41 seats, PSV and Class V, Oct 1991, **£1,750 ono. Tel. 0843 294521.**

(15596/BE)

1981 'W' reg BEDFORD YNT DOMINANT IV

New test, 53 seater, exterior blue and maroon, red moquette, radio, ZF gearbox.

£13,000 + VAT

Tel. (0734) 713257 (Berks)

(15426/BE)

1975 YRT/PLAXTON

MoT to Sept/Oct. Tax to Feb/March. Spotless and no body damage. Fair trim. 53 seats. Choice of 2.

£2,900 ono + VAT each

1972 YLQ/PLAXTON

MoT to March, tax to May. Spotless & excellent body. Trim poor. 45 seats.

£1,800 ono + VAT

Tel: RON WHITTLE

(DAY) 0562 820003

(EVENING) 0746 861208

(15641/BE)

1976 PJK PLAXTON. 29 retrimmed seats (grey moquette), exterior white, all panels good, new clutch, new radiator, exceptional condition for year, 12 months MoT, taxed Feb '91, reluctant sale. **£5,500 ono + VAT. Tel. 0332 812815.**

(15298/BED)

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BOVA EXECUTIVE EUROPA

51 seats, toilet, TV, video, coffee machine, Webasto, private plate, MoT November 1991, excellent condition and first class workhorse.

£29,000 + VAT ovno

Telephone: Office 0487 843333 or after hours 0353740813

(15623/BO)

DAF

1982 DAF MB200 PLAXTON SUPREME GT, 51 recliners plus courier, TV/video, Eberspacher heater, power door, private plates, will be MoT'd until January 1992. **£23,000 + VAT ono. Tel: 0942 727985.**

(15615/DAF)

FORD

FORD

1982 FORD R1014

Duple Dominant. 42 recliners, very good condition, MoT July '91.

£15,950 + VAT

Tel. 0949 837526

(15445/FO)

FORD R1114 DUPE DOMINANT I, 53 seats, S Reg, long MoT, Express doors, Telma, side lockers, curtains, good condition, **£3,750 ono. Tel. (0787) 79261 or (0245) 360236, Essex.**

(15625/FO)

1979 FORD R1114 Plaxton Supreme

53 seats, new engine, excellent condition. Tested March '91.

£7,500 + VAT ono

Tel. 08772 395

(15626/FO)

1982 FORD TRANSIT, 16 seater, petrol, MoT July '91, **£2,500. Tel. (0684) 295188.**

(15645/FO)

LEYLAND

1983 (A) Tiger 245 ZF, 57 seats & courier, laser, radio & PA, P.O.D., tinted windows, MoT Aug 91. Immaculate condition, one driver from new. **£38,500. Barry Cooper Coaches, Warrington. Tel. 0925 67321.**

(15473/LE)

1982 Leyland Cub, Duple Dominant service bus, 31 seats, low mileage, 7ft 6in wide, PAS, new test, lovely condition, **£6,250 + VAT. Tel. 069 887 242 or 069 887 daytime or 289/264 eves/weekends.**

(15520/LE)

1982 X REG LEYLAND TIGER 218

Semi-auto gearbox, Plaxton Supreme VI Express, 57 seats, MoT Feb 1991, radio, PA, cassette, power door, blue and maroon, new double glazed side windows fitted, Bristol dome.

£19,500 + VAT ono

Tel. 0734 713257

Berks

(15427/LE)

1976 FORD
49 seater, power door, test to August 1991.
£2,250 ono + VAT

1977 FORD
45 seater, power door, test to Oct 1991.
£2,500 ono + VAT

0573 261 73 or 0573 24078 eves

(15440/FO)

LEYLAND

WARNERS FAIRFAX

(WARNERS BUS & COACH HIRE)
Tewkesbury, Glos.

- 1981 LEYLAND TIGER Supreme IV GT 50 seats, recliners, tinted windows, curtains, ZF, 218 £24,000 + VAT
- 1983 reg LEYLAND LEOPARD Supreme, 53 seats, curtains, semi-auto £15,000 + VAT
- 1983 LEYLAND TIGER Goldliner, 50 seats, recliners, double-glazed, curtains, fitted TV box etc, 245, ZF £26,000 + VAT
- 1985 LEYLAND ROYAL TIGER Doyen, 47 seats, recliners, double-glazed, toilet, TV, driver's bunk etc, new 245 engine, ZF £30,000 + VAT

ALL VEHICLES IN TIDY CONDITION AND CAN BE VIEWED AT ANY TIME.

PART-EXCHANGE CONSIDERED ON SENSIBLE TERMS.
CONTACT RICHARD OR NICK WARNER

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(15643/LE)

1982
(Private Plate)LEYLAND TIGER 245
DOMINANT IIISuperhigh Executive.
Ticket to February 1991.£16,500 + VAT
for quick saleTelephone: 031 666 0857 or
0836 588331 (Edinburgh)

(15624/LE)

1985 'B' reg

LEYLAND TIGER 245
DUPE CARIBBEAN II53 seater, semi automatic
gearbox, tested to June 1991£47,500 + VAT
Tel: 0889 590948

(15342/LE)

1981 LEYLAND LEOPARD, Plaxton
body, 50 recliners, tinted windows,
good order throughout. £12,500 +
VAT. Tel. 061-477 3325 any time.

(15590/LE)

1983 LEYLAND
TIGER 245Plaxton 3500, 48 r seats,
sunken toilet, water boiler,
double glazed, Webasto,
MoT Feb '91, sold with
new 12 months ticket.£35,000 + VAT ono
Tel. (0767) 312213/
(0860) 465029

(15486/LE)

1985 B REG
LEYLAND TIGER 245with High Deck Duple
Caribbean Body. 51/53
reclining seats,
demountable toilet.
Continental entrance.
Immaculate condition.
Choice of 4. All will be sold
with new MoT valid till Dec
1991.

£44,000 + VAT

Contact Mr A R Jones or
Mr G HudstonW Robinson & Sons (Tours) Ltd,
Park Garages, Gt Harwood
Blackburn BB6 7SP
Tel. (0254) 889900

(15586/LE)

1976

LEYLAND LEOPARD
12 METRE50 seater, semi-automatic,
power steering, nice
interior, drives well.

£5,000 + VAT

Tel: (0702) 540456

(15592/LE)

1981 LEYLAND Leopard Plaxton body,
53 recliners, ZF box, 12 months MoT,
good condition throughout, £18,000
ono + VAT. Tel. (0226) 744344.

(15347/LE)

1983 LEYLAND
TIGER 245Plaxton 3500, 50 recliners,
double glazed, 6 speed ZF,
tested until May '91.

£29,225 + VAT ono

Tel. (0723) 375229

(15629/LE)

MERCEDES

MERCEDES 0303 RHD, 49 rec, white/
red orange/yellow, excellent condi-
tion, C reg, TV/video, carpets, boiler,
bunk, toilet, double glazed, air con-
ditioning, any trial. Bargain £67,000.
Tel: HARRIS SUPER 0527 75353.

(15633/ME)

1989 MERCEDES
609DEuropa, 21 seater,
low mileage.

£23,750 + VAT

Tel. (0723)
375229

(15630/ME)

SCANIA

SCANIA K93 DUPE 320SL

1st registered 10/3/89. Power door, tinted
windows, integral side lockers, radio, PA,
cassette, curtains, central gangway carpet.
55 recliners plus courier, MoT to March
1991. Colours: white base with red & blue
stripes. Low mileage, excellent condition.

£65,000 + VAT

(Finance available)

EMBLING'S COACHES

Tel. (094575) 253 or 210

(anytime) (15616/SC)

WESTERN

5, SCANIA K112 T's FOR SALE
PLAXTON 4000, YEAR 1986, 71 SEATER IN WHITE

£65,000 + VAT EACH

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

0563 22551

(15521/SC)

VOLVO

1980 B58 DOM II BODY with Bristol
Dome, radio tape, air door, 12 meter,
57 E seats - recovered. All floor cover-
ings renewed, engine completely
overhauled February 1991, body and
paint very good, no body damage any-
where. Please view, no obligation to
buy. Tel. 0925 816219.

(15523/VO)

VOLVO "FOR SALE" VOLVO
LEFT HAND DRIVE BUSES
VOLVO B59 - VOLVO B58
VOLVO B58 ARTICULATEDLarge qty available, all in good
serviceable condition, all can be
converted to right hand drive
All can be supplied as "chassis"
only to suit reboddingAll can be supplied "as is" or
"rebuilt" or "fully reconditioned"
with "new vehicle" warrantyc/o GOUGHS TRANSPORT DEPOT,
MORESTEAD, WINCHESTER,
HAMPSHIRE SO21 1JD, UK
Tel (0962) 715566/715555 TLX 477179
Fax (0962) 714868

(15449/VO)

VOLVO

1980, Volvo B58, Plaxton Supreme 4.
53 reclining seats, radio & PA system,
side lockers, two owners from new, 1
year's MoT from 29/11/90. Inspection
welcome, records available. £20,500 +
VAT ono. INGLEBY'S COACHES LI-
MITED. Tel. York (0904) 637620.

(15599/VO)

VOLVO



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Glossary

V8 - Mercedes Engine
(LA - Turbo Intercooling)
ZF - ZF Gearbox
VR - Voith Retarder
F/A - Full Air Suspension,
Independent Front
W/T - Webasto/Timer
D/B - Disc Brakes Front
T/W - Water Toilet
(D - Demountable)
T/V - TV/Video in Coach
Entertainment
Seats - can include Tables,
Footrests, etc.
E/V - Electronic Ventilation
C/B - Cool Box/Fridge
HD - High Deck

R/P - Radio/PA
L/L - Lift and Lower Device
ABS - Anti-Brake Skid System
S(c) - Seats - Recliners
including Courier
S/R - Driver's Sleeping Room
C/L - Central Locking
P/D/F - Power Door Front
C/D - Continental Door
S/F - Special Fitments
- can include Kitchen,
Microwave, Hot Cupboard,
Sinks etc.
K - Kitchen - Sink, Sausage
Boiler, Hot Water Boiler
H - Lower Deck
DT - Double Deck

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1981 X VOLVO B58

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1976 VOLVO AILSA, 79 seats, Alexander body, power steering, single entrance. Test 19-7-91.

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(13734/UN)

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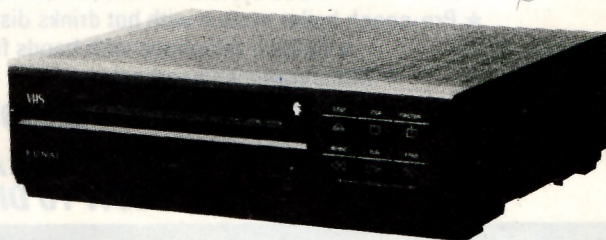
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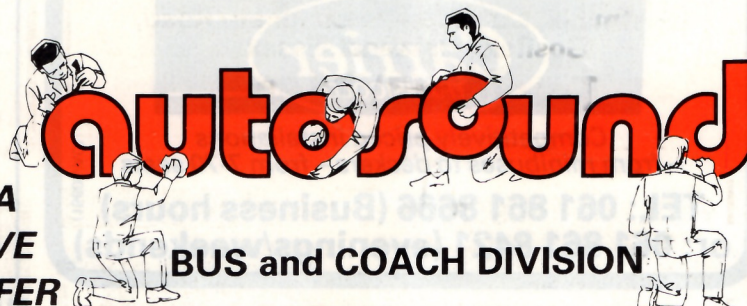
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- DENNIS - BRISTOL - LEYLAND - AEC - DAIMLER SEDDON - PERKINS
- GARDNER - ROLLS ROYCE - WILSON S-CH-G - VOITH - ALLISON
- ZF AUTO - ZF MANUAL - TURNER - SPICER - FULLER - EATON -
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ATTENTION BUS & COACH OPERATORS

LEYLAND AEC

Reliance 760 Engines, recon new £3,000 exch
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B59, B58-B10 Engines THD100 top quality used £2500-£3500
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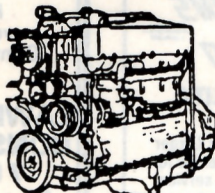
★ ★ LARGEST STOCKS IN ENGLAND OF SPARE PARTS ★ ★ AT PRICES GUARANTEED TO SAVE YOU MONEY

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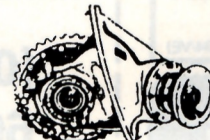
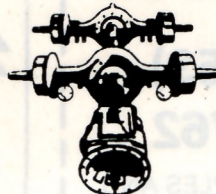
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- Blocks
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- Half shafts



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All major units carry 18 months unlimited mileage warranty.

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Wilts C.C. & Works contracts – 6 International licences
Private hire and excursions.

Booking agents throughout the area. Freehold site.
Substantial premises. Fully equipped workshop and pit,
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(15551/BFS)

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The no.1 for bus & coach sales!

3 WAYS TO SELL IT FAST

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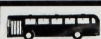
1982 R1114 DUPLX MK IV, curtains, side lockers, Telma, twin tanks, radio, pa, cassette, double glazed, very good condition, MOT April 1991 £14,000 Tel: 0733 898111

SELL YOUR VEHICLE
FOR ONLY
50p PER WORD!

FROM £12.50 + VAT

Minimum 25 words
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2. BARGAIN BUS



BARGAIN BUS

BEDFORD 466
Plaxton body, MOT and
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quick sale.
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Is like this!

MAKE YOUR VEHICLE A
BARGAIN BUY!

ONLY £25.00 +VAT (Maximum
TEL: 0733 898111 25 words)

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DISPLAY YOUR
VEHICLE PLUS UP
TO 30 WORDS!

ONLY £55.00 + VAT
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THE BETTER YOU TELL IT - THE FASTER YOU CAN SELL IT!

1. Choose your advertisement style (please tick)

A STANDARD POSITION

minimum 25 words

x 50p = £

No of words + VAT

B BARGAIN BUS

x £25 = £

No of weeks + VAT

C PICTURE COACH

x £55 = £

No of weeks + VAT

D BOX NUMBER

x £8 = £

No of weeks + VAT

2. What is the best classification for your advertisement? _____

3. ▼ Start your advertisement here - one word per box - minimum 25 words - PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY IN BLOCK CAPITALS

4. Your Name

Company Name

Address

Postcode

Tel:

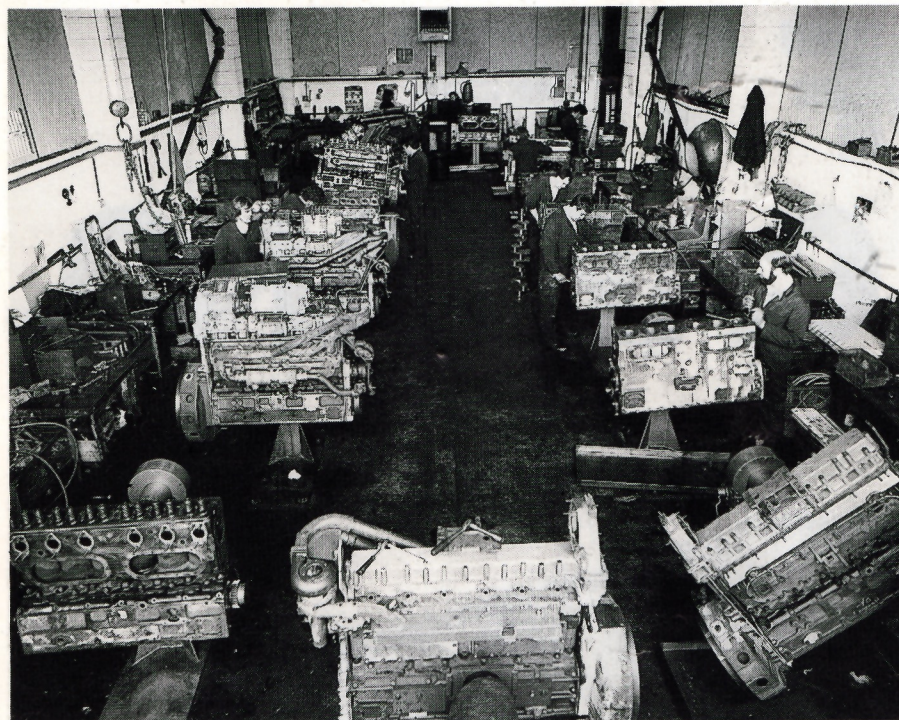
5. I enclose a cheque/postal order for £ _____

Payable to Coachmart, or please debit my Acces/Visa card

No.

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OR TEL: 0733 898111



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1984 VOLVO B10M GALAXY, 49 reclining seats, radio, PA, tape, monitor, video system, curtains, tinted double glazing, power door, continental door and step, toilet, water boiler, courier seat, driver's bunk, full soft trim.

1986 SETRA 215HD, 49 recliners, centre sunken toilet, Cont steps, powered Cont Door, wired for water boiler, video equipment, fridge, radio PA & tape, carpet to saloon, centre aisle, curtains to side windows, finished in white

1982 NEOPLAN CITYLINER MERCEDES V8, 49 seater, TV & video, coffee machine, driver's bunk, centre sunken toilet, curtains, new MoT.

1980 DAF MB200 DKTL PLAXTON SUPREME IV, 57 reclining seats, radio, PA and tape system.

1988 DAF SB2305 DHS CAETANO ALGARVE, 49/53 seats, demountable toilet, 2 x TV, video, hot water boiler, courier seat, driver's bunk, carpets and curtains.

1984 MERCEDES V8 NEOPLAN CLUBLINER, 59 seater, radio, PA, tape, 2 TV & video, 2 tables, curtains, blinds, tinted glass, Webasto, power door, Cont door, toilet, water heater, courier seat, coffee machine, kitchen, side lockers and soft trim. New MoT.

1982 DAF PLAXTON SUPREME V, 47 seater, radio, PA, tape, TV/video, tinted glass, power door, toilet, water heater, courier seat, coffee machine and side lockers.

1976 LEYLAND LEOPARD, DUPLÉ DOMINANT, 53 seats, radio, semi auto, new MoT.

1988 VOLVO B10M CAETANO ALGARVE, 49/53 seats, centre toilet, tv & video, courier seat, double glazing and curtains.

1984 BOVA EUROPA MARK 3, 49 recliners, ZF reconditioned gearbox, new clutch, 265 bhp, toilet, TV/video equipment, Webasto, Nomad drinks machine, carpets, curtains, courier seat, radio/PA & tape and plug door, repainted in white.

1981 VOLVO B58 DUPLÉ DOMINANT II, 53 seats, new MoT.

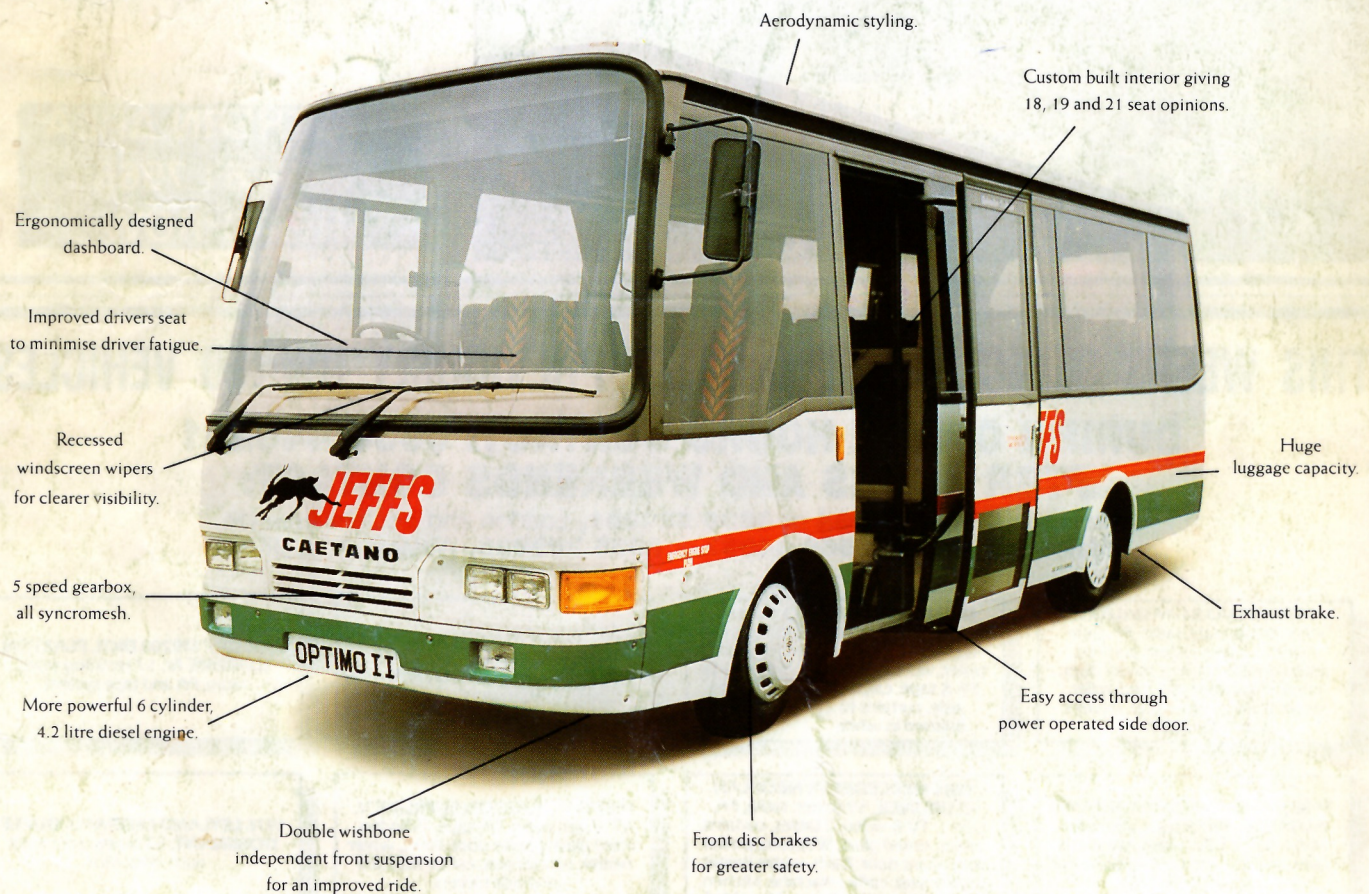
1986 LAG PANORAMIC INTEGRAL KITCHEN COACH, 46 reclining seats, with rear servery, full air conditioning, centre toilet, continental step, water boiler, fridge plus usual executive features.

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